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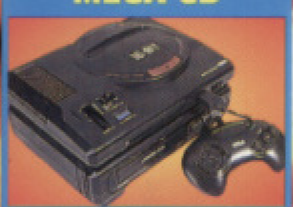
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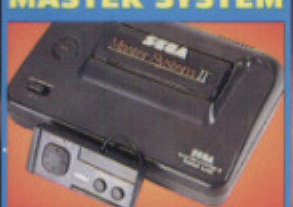
- SPLATTERHOUSE III
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- NINJA WARRIORS
- WILLY BEAMISH
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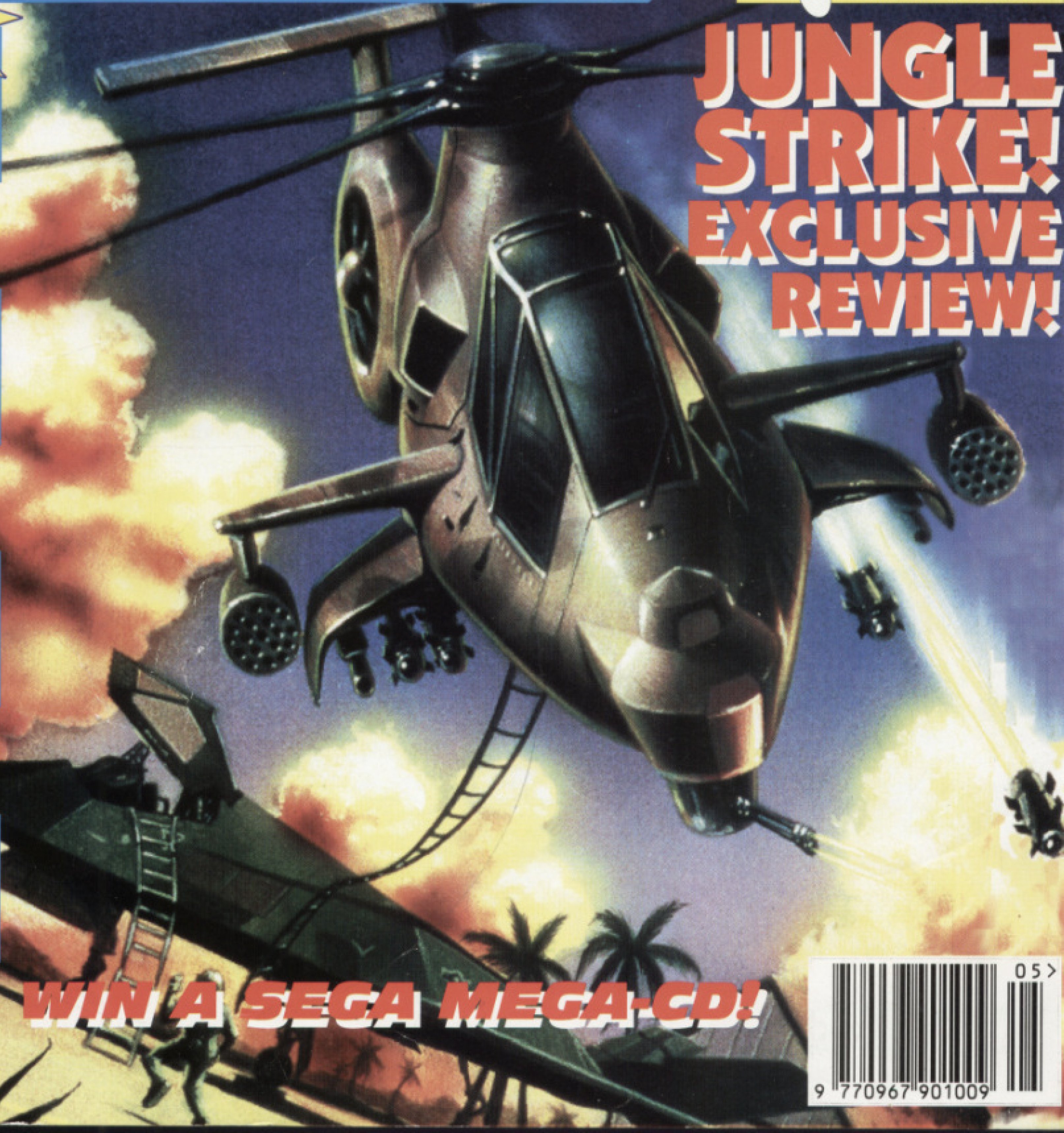


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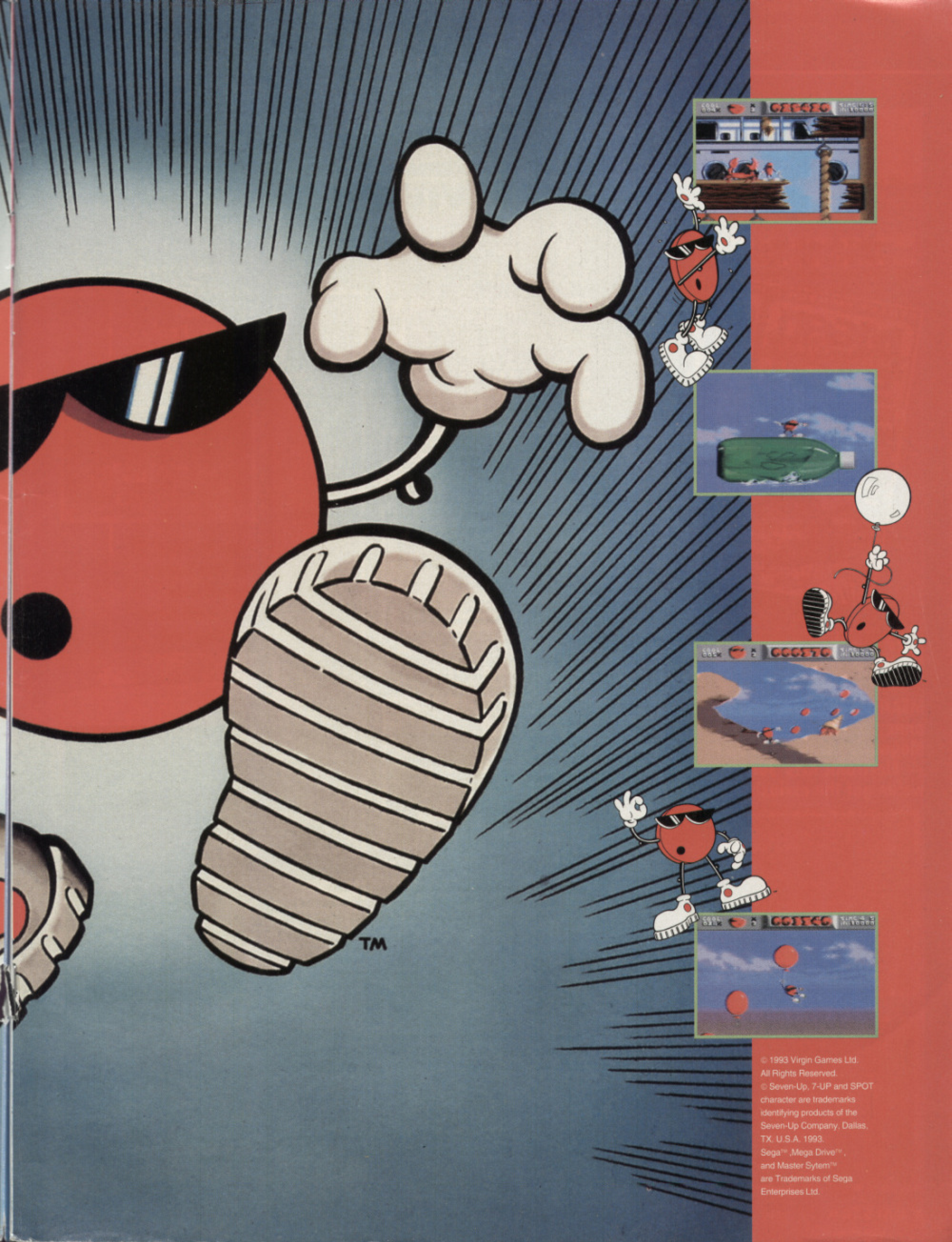
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COVER STORY 16

MEAN MACHINES EXCLUSIVE



JUNGLE STRIKE

MEAN MACHINES SEGA is proud to announce the arrival of the greatest Megadrive shoot 'em up ever devised — Electronic Arts' Jungle Strike, and we've got the exclusive review!





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The Megadrive's answer to the Super NES' Legend of Zelda goes down a storm with the RPG-loving members of the MEAN MACHINES crew.

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NINJA WARRIORS 44
The classic Taito coin-op is converted to Sega's top-of-the-range system, the Mega-CD! What's more, it's a load of old rubbish — doh!

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WILLY BEAMISH 84
Just about the entire summer "vacation" on an American school kid is captured on CD in this fascinating graphical adventure.

We're the first (as always) with the hottest news scoop of them all — loads of pictures of Capcom's forthcoming Street Fighter II: Champion Edition. Real Megadrive pics: check 'em out!





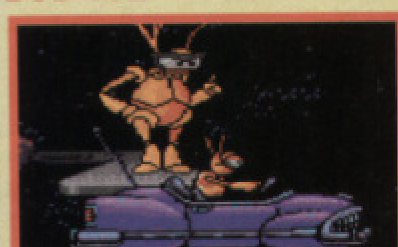
Turn to PAGE 8! For the Sega experience we've all been waiting for!

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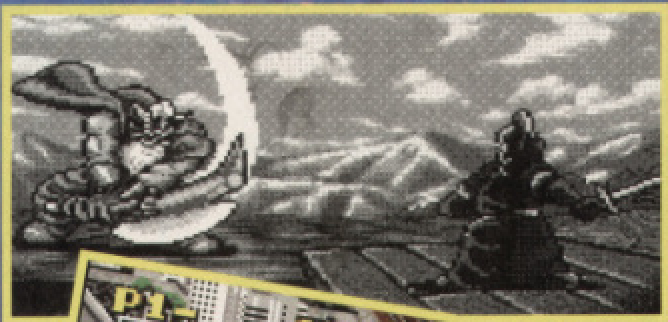


▲ Just watch your step you foul-mouthed wazzock, otherwise I'll hit you with my handbag!



▲ Splatterhouse III's very own headless mutant, yesterday.

• You can't see me Dark Knight, cos I've got my eyes closed!





▲ "I'm the King of the Castle and your the dirty rascal." Check out our building-bashing King of the Monsters action!

REGULARS

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Loads of... intriguing stuff from the man in the hot seat: Rich

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Street Fighter II! Rocket Knight Adventures! Chuck Rock II! We've been to the ECTS show and we've got loads of stuff to tell you.

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As quiet and genteel as ever: the MEAN YOB! Read his words of wisdom on page 22.

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This month Rich answers all your probing questions while Jaz attends an intriguing course in Bishop's Stortford.

TIPS 30
Loads of mini-tips, exciting Game Genie codes and mega-guides to Mega-Lo-Mania and the Mega-CD's awesome Jaguar XJ220!

LOOKBACK 96
Remember when we first revealed Sonic the Hedgehog to an unsuspecting world? Remember the games featured in that issue of MEAN MACHINES? Well here they are, re-reviewed as only we can.

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Excitement abounds in the MEAN MACHINES Mega Mart. Want a bargain? Look no further.

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The follow-up to Castle of Illusion is a hand-held classic, reviewed fully by the real games experts!

WHODUNNIT

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SPECIAL THANKS TO: Andrew Wright and David Joseph at Sega for all things Mega-CD related and to David Wilson, Nick Channon and Simon Jeffrey for getting their hands on Jungle Strike for us — with loads of time to spare.

OFFICE PHRASEOLOGY III
"CAKKA GIBBON"
Credit must go to a certain xxx of zzz who wrote in, coining the phrase "cakka gibbon" (after witnessing Paul Davies lose a challenge on GamesMaster). The instant images of a primate wallowing in its own cack brought a smile to the face of everyone who writes MEAN MACHINES, and the phrase has become a firm office favourite.

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COMPETITION RULES
EMAP Images employees and their immediate family aren't allowed to enter any competitions. There will be no cash alternative to the prize on offer. Nope, none whatsoever.

OZ'S FINAL BIT
This month, Oz Browne would like to express his grief at the loss of one of his heroes, Brandon Lee (son of Bruce Lee), tragically cut down in the prime of life whilst filming his latest movie.

EDIT

MEAN MACHINES: OFFICIAL SEGA CHAMPIONS!

The last few months have been some of the best for MEAN MACHINES. We've been handed the ultimate accolade of MAGAZINE OF THE YEAR by the leisure software industry and handed in an official audit of almost 134,000 copies sold per month — thus making MEAN MACHINES the biggest selling games mag EVER!

This month, we added another feather to our caps at the Official Sega Games Championships. One crisp March morning, a busful of Sega staff, accompanied by some of the specialist press made their way down to Didcot — the official Williams grand prix team HQ. Included in their number were Rad Automatic and MEAN MACHINES very own cakka gibbon, Paul Davies.

Participating in the games championships were representatives from GamesMaster, Megadrive Advance Gaming, Sega Power, Sega Force, CVG, MegaTech, Mega and Sega Pro.

The challenge game was Dragon's Fury (an old MEAN MACHINES favourite), and put simply, we wiped the floor with the lot of them! Paul Davies took the hotseat for MEAN MACHINES, and in a spectacular round amassed around 8,000,000 points — forever destroying his sad cakka gibbon image and bringing glory back to Farringdon in the form of a special winner's laurel wreath and champion's cup!

A special round of commiserations go to poor old Jaz, who *really* wanted to take part in the challenge (and Dragon's Fury is his speciality, it must be said!) but was prevented from doing so by a training course. Aieeeee!

RICH LEADBETTER

MEGA-CD TIN — WITH THIS ISSUE!

As you've probably discovered by now, there's a completely topper exclusive Mega-CD metal box FREE with this issue*. Open it up and you'll find all the info you need on the Mega-CD and the hottest games available. This month we're dealing with the first set of games coming out for Sega's top of the range CD attachment. Next month we've got FOUR more cards to give away (absolutely free of course). Add them to your Mega-CD metal box collection for the ultimate CD-related luxury item! Check out the Next Month page for more info on the next issue of MEAN MACHINES — it's going to be massive!

*The Mega-CD tin is made in association with Sega Europe. It is not a toy, meets all relevant British safety standards and is not suitable for children under the age of six.

THANKS CENTRAL

A big "ta!" goes out from Rich to the following companies for their support in putting this issue together. Console Concepts deserve a bit "thanks!" for sending us a review copy of Splatter House III — call them on 0782 712759. And of course, a hearty "ta" to Advance Console Entertainment (071 439 1185) for mucking about with our Mega-CD so it plays American games and Jap ones as well! Call them if you want a similar operation performed on your Mega-CD.



"FREEZING BUS TRAUMA"

JULIAN "FREEZING BUS TRAUMA" RIGNALL

"There was a thirty mile journey between school and my house, and our bus was a rickety rust pile" recalls Man Ed Jaz. "One day in the depths of winter, the predictable happened, the bus broke down right in the middle of nowhere. The nearest 'phone box was miles away, and the bus driver wasn't allowed to leave us unsupervised. But he did. He locked us all in this freezing bus in the pitch black darkness, at the mercy of the deadly sheep and leeks roaming the area in search of prey. Needless to say, we were justifiably terrified." shivers spiky-topped one.

CURRENT FAVE GAMES:JUNGLE STRIKE, MICRO MACHINES



"FATHER CHRISTMOSQUE"

RICHARD "FATHER CHRISTMOSQUE" LEADBETTER

"Being something of a culture vulture, I was delighted at the opportunity of a place on an RE trip to see a real live mosque," commences Rich in a highbrow fashion. "But imagine my disappointment when I discovered a Mosque is actually a sort of church thing, and not a North African buffalo variant. However, I was mightily cheered when I saw the chap praying inside — he looked just like Father Christmas! Having been a good boy all year, I shouted and waved in hope of instant giftular gratification. But he obviously wasn't too happy that I'd rumbled his disguise and he violently threw me out into the streets." Richard subsequently failed his RE exam and was told off by the teacher at every opportunity.

CURRENT FAVE GAMES:JUNGLE STRIKE, STREETFIGHTER 2 COIN-OP, FINAL FIGHT CD, JAGUAR XJ220

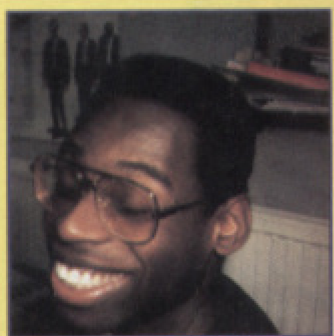
ORIAL


"LOST SODIUM DILEMMA"

LUCY "LOST SODIUM DILEMMA" HICKMAN

Being not much travelled, Lucy's worst school trip was when she dropped a load of acid in chemistry. "I fell over someone's bag and poured sodium nitrate all over the floor." Blurts Lucy, greatly relieving our legal advisors.

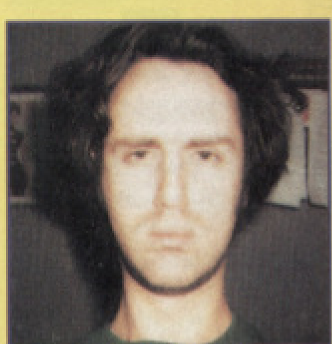
CURRENT FAVE GAMES:JUNGLE STRIKE


"BOW BELLS"

OZ "BOW BELLS" BROWNE

"I remember when we went up north once" says head design chief Oz. "There was this canal with all this moss and that, and I slipped and fell in. I was totally soaked, and because it was out in the wilderness, they didn't have no proper houses or nuffink, so I had to go into some villager's hut thing to get dry, and the only dry clothes they could lend me was this horrible pair of dungarees. Made out of straw." Since this tragic experience of foreign parts, Oz has since vowed never to stray north of Watford.

CURRENT FAVE GAMES:STREETS OF RAGE 2


"BESHT MATE"

ANDY "BESHT MATE" MCVITTIE

"I recall a merry sojourn in Boulogne," sparks off raconteur Andrew. "I'd turned sixteen and so we were allowed in the mineral water houses. Of course, all that, erm, carbon dioxide in the bubbles made us feel rather light headed and giddy, and many of the group spent the whole holiday not knowing where they were or being sick, or chatting to very friendly old chaps with wide-brimmed floppy hats, who offered us places to sleep. But it was okay — we were already booked into a hotel! Tee ho!"

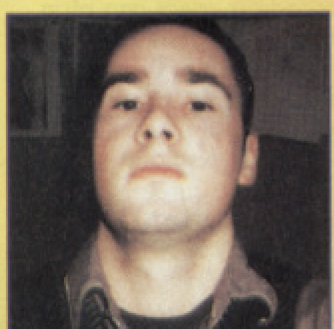
CURRENT FAVE GAMES:HEAD FIGHTER, SKIVE WARRIOR 3 — REVENGE OF THE SHIRK


"OW"

RADION "OW" AUTOMATIC

"Our teachers decided to take us to Telford for a Christmas trip once," winces the lanky locked one. "The real "fun" came in the ice skating, where a member of our year offended one of the local Johnny Hards. Imagine our dismay when we got outside to find that same gentleman, and about forty of his mates, looking extremely peeved. The entire sum of our year then received something of a beating from all these nutters, whilst all the teachers ran "to get the police", or so they said." Rad would like to make it clear to any readers in Telford that he still thinks it's a lovely place and hopes you won't hit him if he ever returns.

CURRENT FAVE GAMES:SHINING FORCE, MICRO MACHINES, MASTER OF DARKNESS


"CALL OF NATURE"

ANGUS "CALL OF NATURE" SWAN

"Och aye the noo, Jimmy!" exclaims Gus stereotypically when questioned on the subject of his school trips disasters. "I recall a time when we went to this grotty "seaside" resort which didn't even have a beach, just a strip of shingle populated entirely by beached jellyfish. Because we couldn't swim in the sea our teachers took us to the local baths, which weren't heated. The real tragedy came when I unwittingly discovered the pool had that chemical indicator stuff in it, and imagine the beatings I suffered when the entire year was immediately thrown out. Gnurks!"

CURRENT FAVE GAMES:SHINING FORCE, MICKEY 2


"DEVIL SHEEP"
"CAKKA GIBBON"

PAUL "DEVIL SHEEP" DAVIES

"Our school dragged us off to Featherstone Castle upon a time" shudders Paul "And we had to sit there while this toff went on with this stupid ghost story and bored us all daft. Anyway, the time came for us to have a wander around the grounds, when what should we chance upon but... a sheep. However, we knew from the start this was no ordinary sheep, this was a sheep from Hell. One look at its vicious horns and glowering eyes and we realised it was in fact a reincarnation of Satan himself! Luckily, me and my mates were able to flee the area before he could claim our souls, but it was *dead scary*." The encounter has put Paul off wild mushrooms for life.

CURRENT FAVE GAMES:SHINING FORCE, MAZIN SAGA


"SCAMPI ?"

DAVE "SCAMPI" KELSALL

"Our school transport back then was just like my own transport now — a Variety Club coach. However, this one had been bought second hand off the local School for the Incontinent and it absolutely reeked of wee. Needless to say it was a bit of a catalyst for everyone's travel sickness, and by the time we'd made the trek over to West Midlands Safari Park one time we found it impossible to obey the wind-your-windows-up rule. However, once we reached the area reserved for primates we wished we had — a gaggle of them climbed up onto the coach, broke the mirrors and the aerial and finished the job by, er, relieving themselves through the open windows. However, our subsequent sickness was tempered with merriment at the sight of the yellow-stained teachers! Tee ho!"

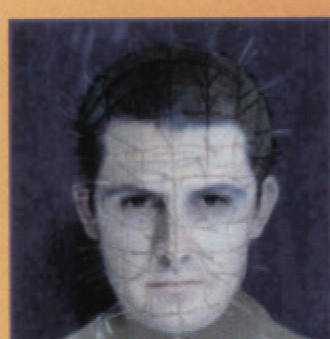
CURRENT FAVE GAMES:JUNGLE STRIKE


"WEEVILS WOBBLE BUT THEY DON'T FALL DOWN"

TOM "WEEVILS WOBBLE BUT THEY DON'T FALL DOWN" COX

"I had a rather dismal biology field trip experience once," muses Tom. "We were stuck in this horrible dingy centre for days, and our only purpose was to dig weevils out of the mud. To make matters worse we were two miles from the nearest, erm, cherryade stand and we weren't allowed out until nearly closing time. Only upon our, ahem, weary, return did we discover that — horror of horrors — we had to share beds! Just when I thought things couldn't get any worse, I found out my bedmate was the smelliest, skengiest tike in the entire group! But I craftily constructed a dummy out of weevils and made good my escape — no one noticed my disappearance for the rest of the trip! Toot toot!"

CURRENT FAVE GAMES:PING PONG, DEFENDER


"STING-"

FRASER "STING" GRAY

Fraser almost groans when asked to recount his tale. "I had to go on a school visit with a bunch of terribly rude boys. They made great sport of pushing a young girl in a bikini into a big patch of stinging nettles. Of course, the poor victim was covered in nasty looking stings, but the thing that ruined the day for me was the poke in the eyes she gave me when I offered to rub down the affected parts with dock leaves. Some people have no concept of manners."

CURRENT FAVE GAMES:JUNGLE STRIKE

NEWS

FINALLY STREET FIGHTER II IS HERE!

For months they didn't believe us. Since November of last year we've been telling you of the imminent approach of Street Fighter II: Champion Edition. Now, as you can see for yourself, the game is complete and ready for release in June... hopefully!

At the beginning of March, the game was shown to a bunch of elite freelance Japanese journalists, among them Francois Hermellin (of our sister publication, the Paris-based Consoles Plus). He reports that the game itself is *extremely* close to the arcade version with all the characters and moves faithfully recreated. The only compromise has been on the backdrops which aren't quite as polished as either the Super NES version or the arcade original's.

Look out for more Street Fighter II news next month. All being well, we should have a massive surprise lined up for you.

- NEW GAME
- BY CAPCOM
- MEGADRIVE







CHAMPION!

Being Champion Edition, this game is significantly better than the Super NES game. Along with improved character portraits, the option exists for players to fight as the same character, albeit with different colours. As our exclusive pictures reveal, the players can even choose to play as the four "boss" characters, Bison, Vega, Sagat and Balrog.

MORE LEVELS?

One fascinating piece of information we have which we can't readily explain is the existance of extra battles. Both the Super NES and arcade versions can have a maximum of 36 battles on one credit. Our Japanese information reveals that up to 72 battles can be fought before the game is complete. Don't ask us to explain it since no extra characters or backdrops have made it into the conversion! We can only think that Capcom have included their usual ARCADE mode and ORIGINAL modes in the game (as seen in their last biggie, Mercs).

HOW TO CONTROL

Street Fighter II is an accurate arcade conversion, meaning that SIX buttons are needed to pull off all of the moves. As we announced months ago, Sega have designed a special six button joypad. This joypad shouldn't cost more than £20 to £25 and comes as standard with the Megadrive II (check out the separate news piece on this new, sleeker Megadrive).

HYPER FIGHTING: THE COIN-OP

Out in arcades now is yet ANOTHER version of Street Fighter II! Called Street Fighter II Hyper Fighting, it's an extra chip set that arcade owners can plug into existing Champion Edition PCBs. Once installed, the characters' clothes change colour once again, and there are loads of extra moves. For example, Blanka now has a vertical spinning cannonball attack, Zangief has a super lariat and E Honda has a super sumo press. This super version of Street Fighter II is coming to console... however, it's only coming out on Super NES. Doh!



▲Chun Li kicks boss ass by moonlight!



▲Battle of the biggies extraveganza!



▲Boxer Balrog bashing versatile Vega into next week, yesterday!

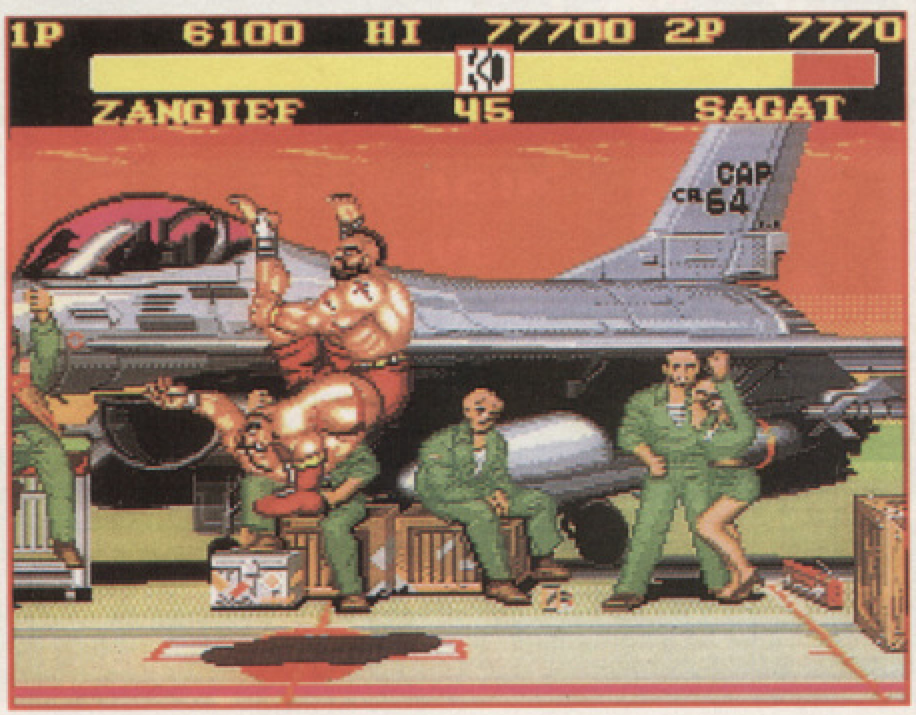


▲It's the luck of the draw — or not!













GET A ROCKETING

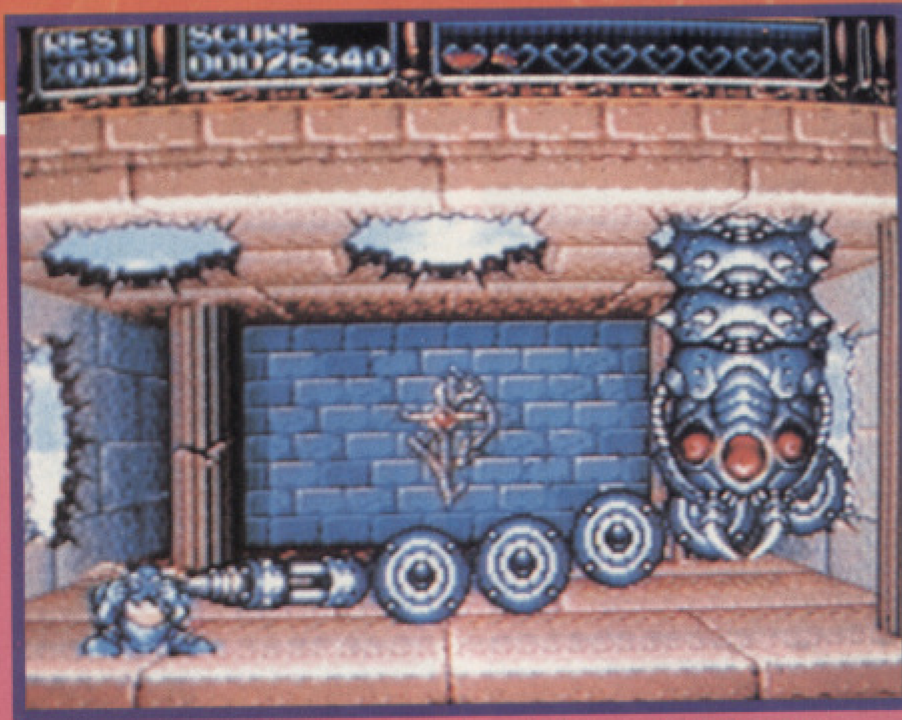
Fans of Konami's most recent and excellent Megadrive games are sure to go crazy over there next release! It's called 'Rocket Knight Adventures' and features a versatile new hero — a mouse named Sparkster.

His story takes place in another galaxy in the enchanted realm of Elhorn. A mediaeval world ruled by seven powerful wizards and one which is constantly at war! The planet's inhabitants live by a mysterious force, an energy that provides them with light and powers their amazing Sky Chariots.

Unfortunately this force is also used for evil purposes by a mysterious Dark King who is attempting to take over Elhorn with an army of hog-like, cyborg troops! This is a practice which Komata, one of the seven wizards, is wholly opposed to. To support his beliefs he trains some specialist soldiers and christens them the 'Rocket Knights'. Sparkster is the last in a long line of these most heroic Knights and since he was orphaned after his father was killed by the Dark King's warriors,he wants revenge! It's quite an interesting story and the game looks something special too.

Apparently Konami are working hard to make this one of the most exciting platform games ever. Judging by these screen shots it looks as though they're succeeding too! Unfortunately the game isn't scheduled for release until the summer. Bah!

- NEW GAME
- BY KONAMI
- MEGADRIVE



▲ Begone foul metal snake type thing from hell otherwise I'll deck ya!

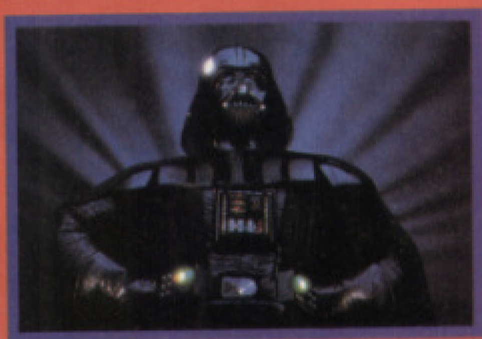

▲ Our hero sensibly takes his leave!


▲ Fancy a jump, mate?!


▲ I want to be a car bumper!


▲ A most impressive bat impression!

SEEING CD STARS



Promising to be an absolutely corking Mega CD offering is Rebel Assault, a 3D Star Wars affiliated arcade-action jaunt coming soon from LucasArts. After the initial pilot training sessions, control T16 Skyhoppers, X-Wing and A-Wing starfighters in three combat tours — defending Tatooine against Imperial attack; battling for possession of the Rebel base on Hoth and flying in the infamous attack on the Death Star. Advanced 3D techniques are used throughout the game which envelops players in rocky planet surfaces, sleek ships and pock-marked asteroids. There's full-voice features, digitised movie sound effects and full-motion video cut scenes inspired by the epic Star Wars.

AND THERE'S MORE

And going for the Star Wars story in a smaller but nevertheless just as interesting way is US Gold with said epic being magicked up for the Game Gear and Master System. You all know the story by now (and if you don't you should be garrotted) so just feast your eyes on these screenshots and keep your eyes peeled for further details.

- NEW GAMES
- BY LUCASARTS/US GOLD
- CD/MASTER SYSTEM /GAME GEAR

- NEW GAME
- BY GREMLIN
- MEGADRIVE

BARKING MAD

Gremlin Graphics is breaking into the Megadrive market with the craziest licence ever — cult band Madness who're joining forces with a brand new character called Nutz in Madness - House of Fun.

Madness was *the* band of the eighties and this all new platformer starring the charismatic Nutz will feature all of their greatest hits including House of Fun, Baggy Trousers, Driving in My Car, Nightboat to Cairo, One Step Beyond to name but a few. We'll bring you all the details just as soon as we can get our hands on them.



ANTY HERO

Zool is an alien Ninja and Defender of the Nth Dimension according to his makers, Gremlin Graphics. To us he looks a little bit like an ant but whatever he is, he's soon to star in his very own arcade platform Megadrive game. Watch this space for more details.

- NEW GAME
- BY GREMLIN
- MEGADRIVE



▲ *Sonic flies the flag for the Cannon Williams team in a cute, fluffy kind of way*

WORLD DOMINATION

Continuing their quest for world domination, Sega Europe have signed up Formula One World Championship winners Canon Williams in a multi-million pound sponsorship deal.
Sega are rubbing their hands in glee at the prospect of world beaters such as Alain Prost and Damon Hill sporting the Sonic colours and badges on their top class cars on some of the toughest racing circuits of the world. And the prospect of all those free tickets to all the races can't be half bad either eh?

I'M GOING TO CHUCK (AGAIN)

- NEW GAME
- BY CORE DESIGN
- MEGADRIVE

Reasons to be cheerful on the Core Design front (those stonking chaps who programmed the likes of Jaguar XJ220 and Chuck Rock) is firstly this splendid company is starting to publish Sega games themselves, secondly the first offering is Chuck Rock II: Son of Chuck Rock on all Sega systems and thirdly it's looking MEGA!
We had a good play about on the Megadrive and Master System versions and the 16-Bit version is looking damn good while the 8-Bit variety is looking very damn good.
The story tells of Chuck Rock, now the president of Chuck Motors, being kidnapped by his arch business rival Brick Jagger, the dodgy boss of the Datstone Car Company. A ransom slab arrives through the window of the Chuck mansion listing a mound of impossible demands in return for Chuck's safe return. Being his father's son, Chuck Junior, aged only six months, throws himself out of the playpen and armed with only an ungainly club and a pack of Pampers, sets off to save his dear papa.
We'll bring you a all the in-depth gen on this one as and when but remember, you heard it here first!



▲ *Kids today eh. Only 6 months old and already rock chucking!*

TECMAGIKAL LICENCES

- NEW GAMES
- BY TECMAGIK
- MEGADRIVE









Following up their breakthrough into the Megadrive market with André Agassi Tennis, Tecmagik has some pretty spiffy 16-Bit titles lined up including cartoon legends Pink Panther and Sylvester and Tweety and movie legend, Steven Seagal, star of the movie box-office hit — Under Siege.
This is one of the first times a software company has bought the rights to an actual person but Tecmagik has done it and Steven Seagal's first adventure will take place in the year 2194 where the man will use his Aikido skills to topple the evil world-controlling megacorporation.
The two cartoon licences are both platformers and from what we've seen so far they're looking pretty smart — even at this early stage. Catch up on the latest gen in future issues.



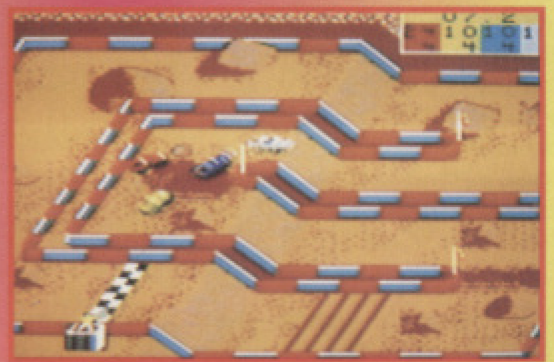


I'LL BE BACK (PART TWO)

- NEW GAME
- BY VIRGIN
- MEGA-CD

When Arnie spoke those immortal words "I'll be back" he sure wasn't kidding was he? Because back he is yet again and this time looking better than ever in The Terminator on the Mega CD courtesy of Virgin.
You all know the tale: Kyle Reese comes back from the future to protect Sarah Connor (who holds the key to the survival of the human race) against the cybourg horror of the Terminator who's mission in life is to waste her. What you probably don't know (because you won't have seen it whereas we have) is that so far it's looking pretty fab — much better than the Megadrive version and looks set to be a bit of a scorcher when it hits the street later this year. Stay tuned for updates.

ROAD RIPPING STUFF



It's high-speed, teeth-rattling driving action galore in the cab of an off-road race truck coming soon to the Master System with Super Off Road courtesy of Virgin.
Race round 12 testing tracks, negotiating the tough conditions caused by humps, bumps, dips, troughs, chicanes, short-cuts in whichever way takes your fancy in a no holds barred contest for wonga, glory and girlies. The more you win, the better you can make your dream machines so push the pedal to the metal and let rip! More details when we get them.

- NEW GAME
- BY VIRGIN
- MASTER SYSTEM

TWO TRIBES GO TO WAR

- NEW GAME
- BY VIRGIN
- MEGADRIVE

It's a fight to the death, the eternal struggle between good and bad, only when gods battle it out, the results tend to be a bit more catastrophic as people and places are wiped out in the fury. This is Two Tribes: Populous II and you are the child of Zeus — you must fight for your rightful place on Mount Olympus, the home of the gods.
Produced by Virgin, Two Tribes: Populous II follows your wild fight to prove yourself worthy in a battle against Zeus' choice of opponents and terrain. Command a small tribe of ignoramuses, helping them to survive enemy attacks and natural disasters. Tackle a series of 1,000 landscapes or create your own worlds. The choice is yours. Make it wisely and tune into future issues for an update.



THE WONDERFUL THING ABOUT TIGGERS

Virgin has grabbed itself a tasty licence in the form of The Jungle Book arriving later this year on all Sega formats. It stars the man cub Mowgli on a quest to return to the Man Village on the outskirts of the jungle. There are 12 main levels where he meets heaps of characters from the film, collects bonuses, uncovers hidden areas and bonus games and conquers enemies with throwing bananas and nuts. More news when we get it.

- NEW GAME
- BY VIRGIN
- MEGADRIVE

CORE WOTTA CHOPPER!

As the headline might suggest this game features a helicopter but that's where any similarity between things that are remotely mundane and this game ends because Thunderhawk on the Mega CD from Core Design is going to be an absolute corker. We had the pleasure of giving it the once over at the recent ECTS show and our eyes were out on stalks at the utter class that this game oozes from every pore.
You're in the seat of a multi-role helicopter Gunship using state-of-the-art technology and firepower as you zoom through the 3-D graphic system at speeds beyond belief. Gut feeling tells us this is going to be an absolute stormer but we'll keep you posted as soon as we are. Don't miss it!

- NEW GAME
- BY CORE DESIGN
- MEGA-CD



▲ *Choppers ahoy with a whopper from Core — hurrah!*

BATTLE OF THE TIN HEADS

- NEW GAME
- BY VIRGIN/ACCLAIM
- ALL STSTEMS

It had to happen. Two metal heads —one good, one bad, who have both raked in loadsa cash for their makers — had to meet in a battle of the machines to (a) win the fight of good over evil and presumably save the world and (b) roll in even more wonga for said makers. It's happening this winter, it's coming from Virgin and it's Robocop vs Terminator on all Sega formats. Over 12 blasting levels you play Mr Goody-two-shoes Robocop taking on rucks of Terminators... and their Terminator dogs, Terminator cats and Terminator spiders... Naturally your fight to save Delta City is helped along by a mound of high-power weaponry. More details soonest. And that sickly good copper isn't content to just frequent one block-buster, oh no, he's got to go all the way with a game of his very own, aptly called Robocop which is coming out from Acclaim on all Sega formats — more news coming soon.



▲ *Sleek and cheap — the new Megadrive and CD coming soon...*

HEAD CASE

- HARDWARE
- BY SEGA
- MEGADRIVE/CD

Phwoar! Looky here at the ultra sleek 'n' sexy new Megadrive and Mega CD case winging its way to this country — don't it look cool?! But the best news is (as rumour has it), this Megadrive II will cost just £50 while the Mega CD II, minus all its fancy (and rather useless) flashing lights will cost just £150 instead of the ridiculous £270 odd currently demanded of punters. It's hoped the two will hit the streets before Christmas but when we've firmed up the rumour we'll fill you in.

SEGATAP

- ACCESSORY
- BY SEGA
- MEGADRIVE

Open wide for the latest little widget from Sega — the SEGATAP, a four-player adapter which can be used in conjunction with an all new soccer game, J League Pro Striker (out in April) where you can play four players with two players on team. More games to use with the SEGATAP are on the way, notably Gauntlet due out later this year. Hurrah!



ALIEN ANTICS

Psygnosis are breaking into the Megadrive market with a truly spiffy looking little offering — Puggsy, a platform puzzler guaranteed to tax any half decent braincell.
Over 51 levels and 17 locations such as the Beach, Aztec Temple, Diamond Mines, Dark Skull Castle and Angle Tier Falls, you as Puggsy must work your way through the levels using whatever objects come to hand. There's stacks to do and over 100 different creatures to avoid or destroy.
First look at this suggests Puggsy is going to be an absolute corker for people of all ages — even the young 'uns can have a ball because there's a special junior section. Grab a copy of MEAN MACHINES SEGA next month for the full low down.

- NEW GAME
- BY PSYGNOSIS
- MEGADRIVE



PREHISTORIC PALAVA

- NEW GAME
- BY VIRGIN
- MEGA-CD

Console games are getting more bizarre by the minute – fancy having a Mega CD game about roller-skating dinosaurs causing havoc with hockey sticks. But Virgin have done it and the result is Dinoblades.

This scrolling beat 'em up follows the adventures of four roller-skating dinosaurs, Wayne, Sid, Ducky and Louie, two of whom get kidnapped and threatened with extinction by some evil thugish type dinosaurs. It all gets very tricky as you progress along the dozen plus levels fighting off the cartoony but deadly bosses such as the chainsaw-wielding Alky, Dino Rex, the rock 'ard Rumpus and lethal lizard, Luciano. Fuller updates in future issues.

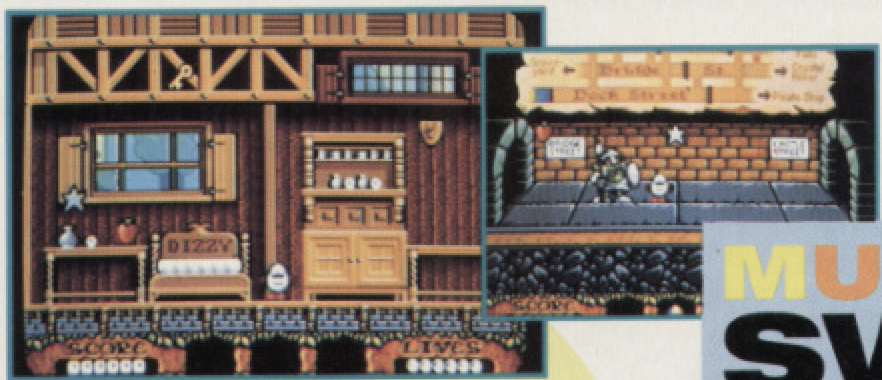


CHOPPER GIBBON

- NEW GAMES
- BY DOMARK
- MASTER SYSTEM /GAME GEAR

You've had it on the Megadrive until it was coming out your ears. Now it's hitting the Master System and Game Gear, it's Desert Strike, it's from Domark and it's looking GREAT.

Your mission under orders from the President of the US of A is to crank up your whirlybird and defeat the completely barking middle eastern leader, General Kibaba. Pilot one of the most advanced 'copters in the world through four gruelling campaigns and 27 missions to take out Kibaba's air-forces and scud missiles, rescuing hostages and wasting the evil forces. So far it's looking pretty hot stuff but we'll give you a full run down in a future issue.



▲ *Who's been sleeping in my bed? Oh it's an egg. Right. Fine. AAArgh!*

EGG CARTS

- NEW GAME
- BY CODEMASTERS
- MEGADRIVE

Codemasters' infamous egg is coming to a Megadrive near you soon in the Fantastic Adventures of Dizzy. This cartoon platform adventure character has sold millions of units across stacks of formats but now he's going 16-Bit and as you can see he's looking quite smart!

MULTI-COLOURED SWAPSHOP

- TRADING CARDS
- BY PANINI
- ALL FORMATS

Serious game nuts should watch out for a pile of collectible game cards soon to hit the shops which rate and tip all your fave Sega games and characters.

The 118 Sega Super Play Panini cards were compiled and designed by the MEAN MACHINES crew so you can count on the hottest info. They include 16 character cards, 72 game cards explaining the objectives of the games and 30 game play cards giving hints and tips. They're hitting the stores any time now priced 40p for eight and we'll be starting off your collection with a pack of eight FREE on the next issue of MEAN MACHINES SEGA — miss them at your peril!



JUNGLE



1 PLAYER

PRICE	TBA
BY	EA
RELEASE	JUNE

OPTIONS

CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES: PASSWORD
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: AWSOME
GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM

1ST DAY SCORE

CAMPAIGN 2 COMPLETE

ORIGIN

Jungle Strike is the follow-up to EA's most successful release to date: Desert Strike!

HOW TO CONTROL

Jungle Strike features two control methods, with momentum and without. Up causes you to accelerate, left and right to rotate your vehicle.

- **A** Fire Hellfire
- **B** Fire Hydra
- **C** Fire Cannon
- **S** Starts and pauses the game.

HOW TO PLAY

Each campaign has a number of missions to complete, generally involving blasting enemies and rescuing imprisoned friendlies.

▼Co-er! Two whopping choppers for the price of one and that one on top looks like hot stuff!



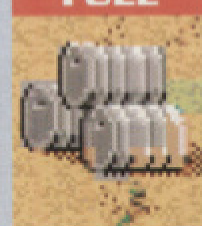
COMANCHE COLLECTABLES

As you play, you use up your chopper's supplies — be it armour, fuel or ammo. Luckily, your chopper is equipped with a winch that enables you to pick up extra supplies, or even people!

ARMOUR



FUEL



AMMO





Alarm bells are bound to be ringing in the Pentagon when a small island off South America is suddenly wiped from existence by a massive nuclear blast! Luckily, US Intelligence had been studying the area in some depth and spy satellites were able to reveal the culprits. Who should it turn out to be? Why, none other than the son of the original Desert Strike madman, General Kilbaba! He's teamed up with a nameless South American drug lord (known only as the Drug Lord), recently escaped from a Florida prison.

The general feeling is that these two evil men are obviously up to no good. Later intelligence confirms that they've hatched a plan to destroy the United States of America! Indeed, that "later intelligence" came straight from the White House's living room, from where terrorists can be seen, setting up their tanks, jeeps and rocket launchers.

You (yes, you!) have been chosen to clamber into a new Comanche Attack Helicopter and destroy the attack on Washington. From there, it's your job to track down Kilbaba and the drug lord across eight more campaigns' worth of tactical, eight-way scrolling shoot 'em up action.



Your Comanche helicopter has three distinct types of weapon available. Each is detailed below:

HELLFIRE MISSILE: The most powerful weapon is the hellfire missile — two of these are enough to annihilate a Sherman tank, three an Apache helicopter gunship. Nine hellfires can be fitted onto your chopper.

HYDRA ROCKETS: Probably the most useful armament you carry. One hydra carries enough firepower to destroy an enemy watch tower. Sixty hydras are packed as standard.

CANNON: In the first few missions, you end up sticking to your hydras, but once you've got a suitable co-pilot, the cannon comes into its own in terms of versatility. A thousand rounds of ammo are supplied.

STRIKE

COMMENT



RICH

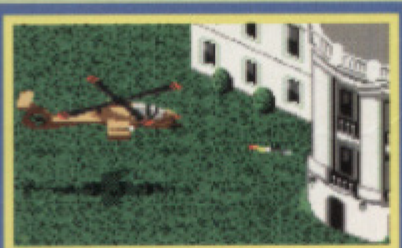
Jungle Strike blew me away! The 16-meg cart has been put to full use, with an overall campaign that's over twice the size of the original. There's a massive amount of variety in this whopper of a game — from rescuing the president to recovering nuclear weapons and getting imprisoned civilians to UN relief camps! All of the missions require a bit of thought and strategic planning — rushing in and blasting isn't the answer. The control method is great too. Using the momentum of the chopper, you're able to pull off some amazingly graceful combat manoeuvres. Getting a decent co-pilot is brilliant — it's like having the fastest autofire joypad money can buy! The extra vehicles are a neat idea — my fave's the stealth fighter (because it's so rock hard!). I could go on forever about how brilliant this is. Suffice to say that Desert Strike was a classic Megadrive blaster. However, Jungle Strike is bigger, better and far more playable! The greatest Megadrive blaster without a shadow of a doubt and definitely EA's finest achievement to date!

SUPER WINCH!

Located in each level is a Super Winch. Collect this and the Comanche's winch system is instantly upgraded, allowing you to pick up supplies twice as quickly!



WEAPON WIELDING









▲ *Goodness, gracious, great bulging balls of flippin' hot fire!*

▼ *He flies through the air with the greatest of ease, that helicopter pilot in his killing machine!*







▲ *If I've told you once, I've told you a thousand times to clean your room well I'm not taking this mess any more...*

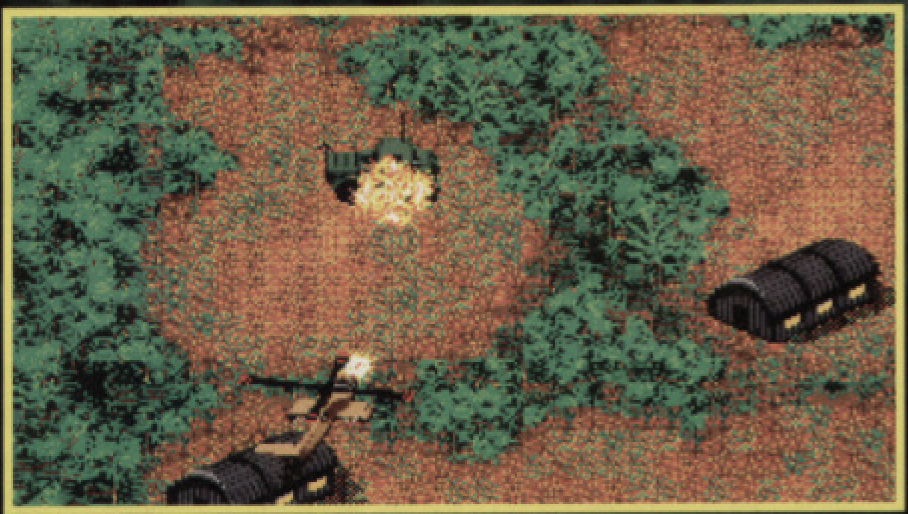
TRANSPORT

Your Comanche chopper, being the latest in helicopter technology, is usually enough to deal with the varied missions in

HOVERCRAFT: Used in campaign two, the hovercraft enables you to get past a bridge that the Comanche can't get around. It's ideal for marine warfare, carrying rockets, a high calibre cannon and — best of all — mines! These enable you to blow up enemy gunships just by dropping one of them in their path!

SPECIAL FORCES MOTORCYCLE: Campaign five demands that you make use of the special forces motorcycle. This is basically a normal bike with massive missile-spewing attachments. A cannon and land mines also come as standard!

F-117 STEALTH FIGHTER: The Drug Lord has stolen a US stealth fighter! Locate it and then use it to destroy the drug fields in campaign seven! Armed with ironbombs, AIM-92 missiles and a powerful cannon, it's a force to be reckoned with!





COMMENT



JAZ

Weapons of supreme destruction to control! Thousands of rounds of ammunition to use! Loads of utterly evil terrorist baddies to blow away (and they really deserve it)! Drug fields to bomb! Bridges to burn! Gun emplacements to blast! Tanks to trash! AND a motorbike to ride! Things don't get much more fun this side of sharing a sleeping bag with Cindy Crawford. Unlike some of EA's sequels of late, Jungle Strike really does improve on the original formula — it's twice as big, has better graphics and sound, loads more variety, completely new missions and scenarios, new vehicles and the gameplay is much more challenging.There's just so much more in it, and it's really tough too. It really is the greatest Megadrive shoot 'em up ever seen and is an absolutely essential addition to your cartridge library.

CAMPAIGN 1 WASHINGTON



Terrorists have invaded Washington, bent on destroying the national monuments! It's your job to take them out (not for a candle-lit meal) and make sure that the president reaches the White House in safety!

CAMPAIGN 2 SUB ATTACK



Kilbaba's plutonium supplies are in transit! Clamber into a nearby hovercraft, destroy his marine fleet and recover the plutonium. Then you've got to annihilate his fleet of heavily armed submarines before returning home for tea and medals.

TOMFOOLERY

Jungle Strike. However, some campaigns require that you make use of specialised transport to get the job done.



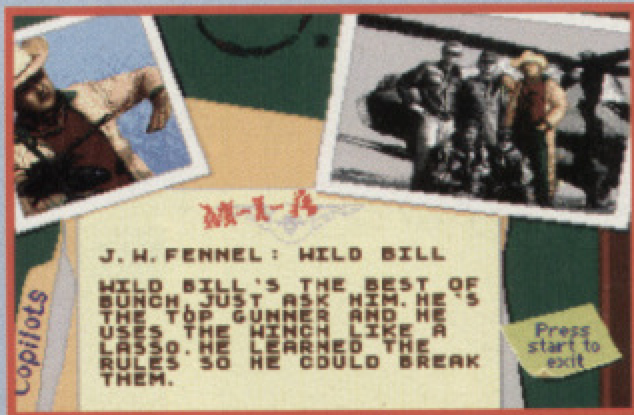


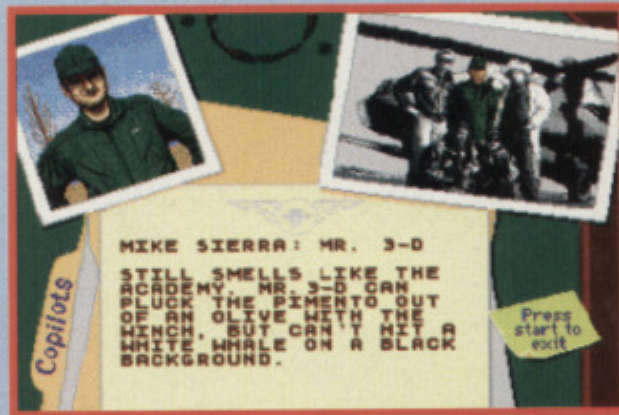




PARTNERS IN CRIME

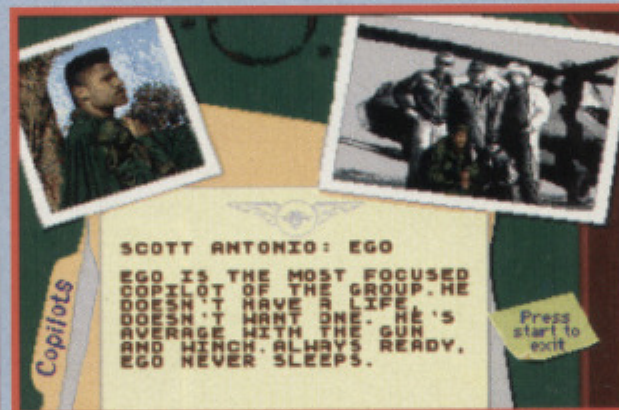
At the start of the game, you get to choose which co-pilot will accompany you in the next mission. The co-pilot controls the helicopter's winch and weaponry. You'll notice that some of the co-pilots are MIA (Missing in Action) — rescue them in later campaigns and make use of their skills.



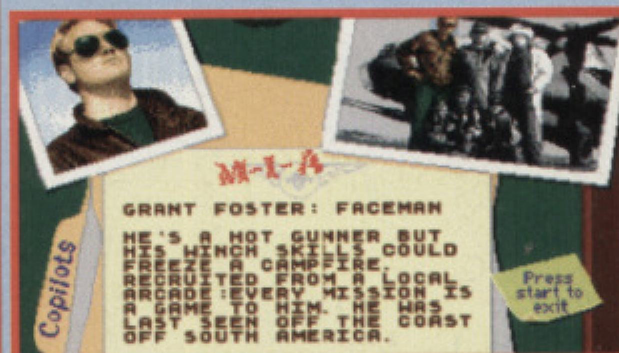




Stealthily steal up in your stealth fighter like a stealthy type thing with a university degree in stealth.







CAMPAIGN 3 TRAINING GROUND



Secure a landing zone and then lay into the enemy training camp as only you can! Watch out for sheridan tanks and enemy cannons as you destroy mobile radar units and attempt to recover a stolen nuclear reactor!

CAMPAIGN 4 NIGHT STRIKE



A night strike is required to achieve a number of objectives: first of all, to destroy the enemy chopper fleet and then to rescue some POWs and captive scientists. Round off a pleasant evening by destroying the enemy weapons plants and capturing an enemy General for good measure!











COMMENT



Phwoar! What a sexy game! I wasn't a major fan of this game's predecessor, the hugely popular Desert Strike, since I found it somewhat repetitive and limited (after all, there's only so much you can do with a small chopper and four levels). But Jungle Strike is a completely different kettle of fish. With more than twice as many levels, all of them completely varied, and four different crafts to master, this one is a total winner. After a few minutes to get used to the controls, you can get well stuck in and pretty soon you're completely absorbed in wasting terrorists, rescuing hostages and protecting the American way. Graphically this game is superb and the sound effects and music effortlessly drag you into the tense atmosphere of intrigue and suspense. It's not easy either with a difficulty setting that ensures that it'll take you ages to finish. It's a bit of a shame that you can't be as trigger happy as before — if, for example, you casually blast the daylights out of a precious monument you're ordered back to base in disgrace and it's game over — most unfair. This game is arguably the best Megadrive shoot 'em up ever seen and who am I to argue?

CAMPAIGN 5 PULOSO CITY

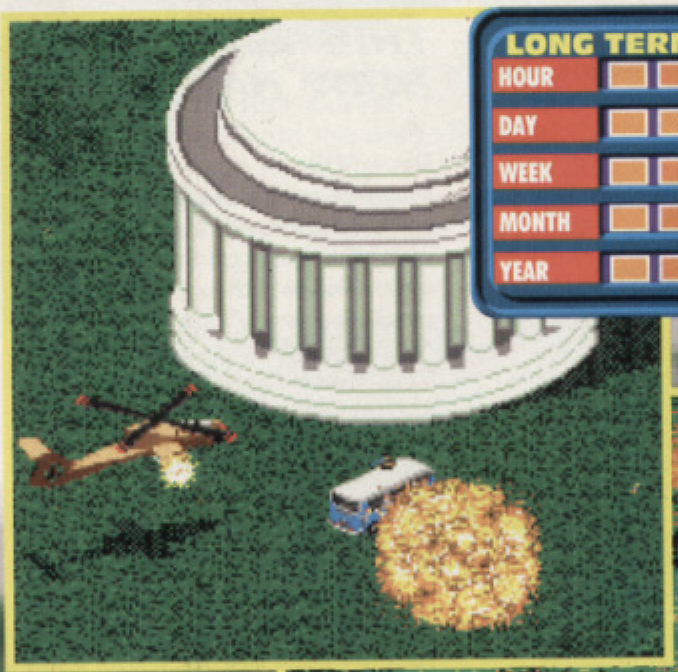


San Puloso has been overrun by the drug lord and his twisted troops! Go in there and destroy the makeshift prisons. Ferry the survivors to the UN relief camp before going after the counterfeiting and drug factories. Then hit the power lines and go for the drug lord's war room!

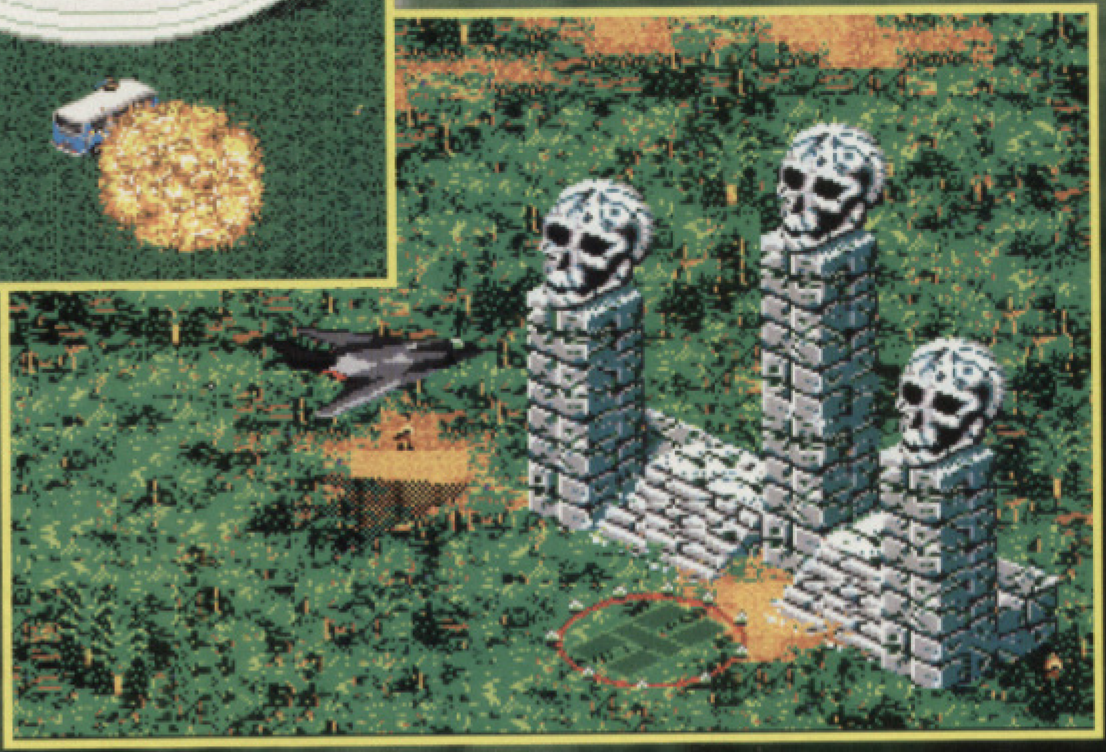
CAMPAIGN 6 SNOW FORTRESS



Wild Bill, the best co-pilot of them all, is being held in a prison camp. Find and release him before destroying the underground snow fortress! Beware, for although the snowscape looks barren and lifeless, it is in fact teeming with enemy troops and sherman tanks.



LONG TERM REPORT	BREAKDOWN
HOUR	STRATEGY
DAY	ACTION
WEEK	CHALLENGE
MONTH	REFLEXES
YEAR	



▲ ***Begone foul school bus type thing and take your hands off my mighty monument otherwise I'll waste you… just like that!***

▶ ***By the Power of Greyskull! Come on, I'll take all three of you bone heads on — no problem!***



CAMPAIGN 8 THE MOUNTAINS



Kilbaba and the drug lord have fled to their respective mountain hideaways. Fight your way past control towers and heavily defended tomahawk missile sites and dispose of the evil duo… if you can!

CAMPAIGN 7 RIVER RAID



The enemy has captured a US stealth fighter. Recover it and then use it to destroy the drug lord's poppy fields, patriot missiles and nuclear arsenal! If you think you've had hassle from the enemy before, you ain't seen nothing yet (to coin a phrase).

CAMPAIGN 9 CENSORED!

Despite your best efforts in the previous campaigns, the drug lord and madman are still alive and bent on destroying world peace. Stop them! We're being deliberately vague about this campaign because it took us years to get there and we don't want to spoil it for you!

PRESENTATION 98

▲Loads more cut scenes than Desert Strike, all of a high quality. The in-game presentation and options are second to none.

GRAPHICS 95

▲Awesome! Loads of variety in each of the levels, amazing sprites and awesome animation, along with stunning backdrops.

SOUND 94

▲Thumping music for the cut scenes and intro screen — the campaign complete music is skill. The sound effects are great, with loads of digitised samples!

PLAYABILITY 96

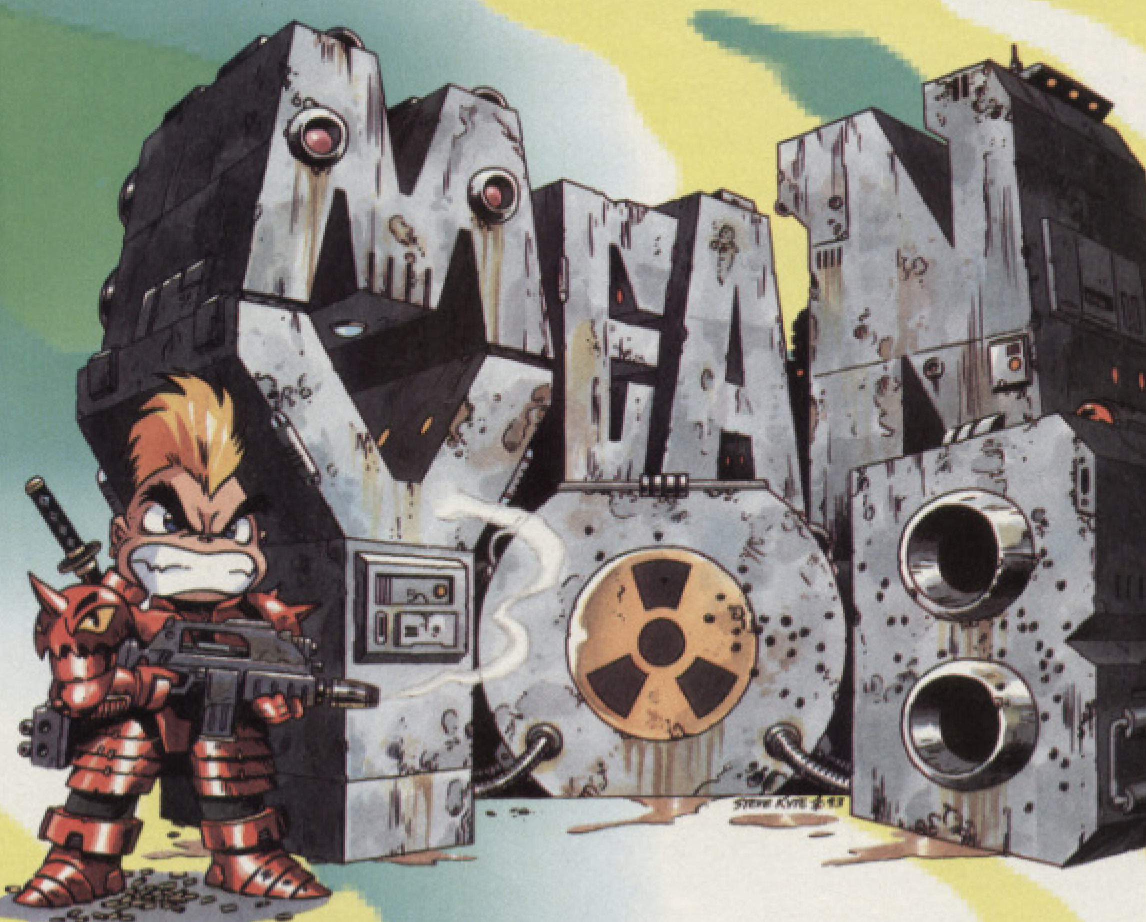
▲Jungle Strike's easy to get into and highly addictive from the word go. The control method is perfect, making it a real pleasure to play.

LASTABILITY 94

▲Nine massive campaigns make this game twice the size of Desert Strike! Even when you've completed the game, there's still scope for improving your score.

OVERALL 96

One of the highest quality Sega games money can buy! Jungle Strike ranks as the greatest Megadrive shoot 'em up ever released — definitely the best game since Ecco the Dolphin!



What a month for letters this hasn't been. What's the matter with the lot of you? Cat got your pencils? Forgotten how to write? Or is there nothing on your minds apart from 'When's Street Fighter II coming out?' I mean, I thought I was hard up for letters for my CVG postbag, but at least I get the right quantity of letters there, if not the quality. Come on! I expect more from you lot! Write something interesting! NOW!! The address to write to is: YOB! YOB! I'M NOT A BRAINLESS GIT!, MEAN MACHINES SEGA, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON, EC1R 3AU. And make it good or there'll be trouble!

EVERYTHING YOU EVER WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT PAUL THOMPSON

Dear Sega Magazine
My name is Paul Thompson. My address is 13 Portlaoise Road, Portarlington Co. Laois Ireland. I am eleven years old and interested in Sega. Could you please send me some Sega goodies like posters of Sonic the Hedgehog 1 or 2 and stuff like that..I have a Sega Master System, an Amstrad 464 and a Game Boy. For the Sega I have four games: The Ninja, Golden Axe, Alex Kidd in Miracle World and Global Defence. I've cleared Alex Kidd and have found tips in Sega Magazine for the Ninja and Golden Axe but I can't get far in Global Defence. Could you help me? Also could you send me some information of what goes into printing 'The Complete Guide to Sega Magazine? Well I'm asking for a lot!
Paul Thompson, Ireland

YOB: Well, there you have it ladies and gentlemen, the full run-down on Paul Thompson. If only you'd sent in your shoe size and the name of your favourite fizzy drink, Paul, we could have programmed an android to take your place and no-one would have known the differcnce. Hennnnyway, I'm afraid we don't have posters of Sonic or any stuff like that which we can send you, but you might like to write to Sega at 16 Portland Road, London, W11 (but hurry, they're moving offices soon) or even go down to your local computer shop and see if they've got any old posters left over from in-store promotions.We could send you some info on how we produced The Complete Guide To Sega but, to be honest, it wouldn't be very informative and probably wouldn't make a lot of sense unless you had been there at the time. Er, look, trust me, you don't want to know, okay?

THIS MAN HAS NO BODY HAIR

Dear YOB
May I congratulate you for being so thick!!! You try to insult people with your basic and simplistic comments which come out of your smelly backside.
As everybody knows, that punk is supposed to be you, and aren't you an ugly git! I hope you don't mind me saying that I think your eyes and your gob are immensely out of proportion to the rest of your face. Try if you want to insult me with that crappy (common) London accent of yours, but you will only make a bigger prat of yourself than before.
By the way, the MEAN MACHINES reviewing system is really crap. For example, on the long term report on your review section you give a game mark for how long it will keep you interested. But because you only have a new game for a short period of time how can you give a rating for a year. What MEAN MACHINES is doing is making rough and inaccurate conclusions. Bye!
Dominik 'No Body Hair' Diamond, Gamesmaster Funny Farm

YOB: Hoho no, you can't fool me with that fake name, y'know. No-one in the world, not even the real Dominik Diamond, could match the sublime wit you've shown in your letter. In fact "wit" isn't even close to being the right word, and I can only conclude that we are witnessing, yes indeed, right here, on this page, myself and the entire MMS readership, the birth of a new

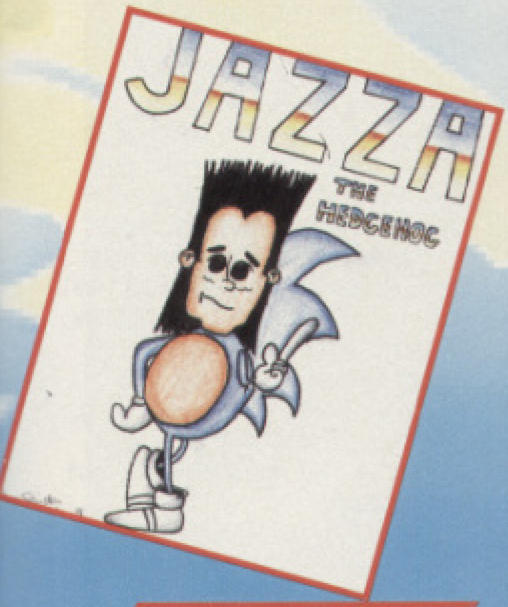


Stu '93 is responsible for this nice picture of a rather jovial Mr Bison. What a jolly chap he is.

form of comedy which goes beyond the boundaries of "funny" transcends "gigglesome" and is, in fact, purest "ass-talk". I'm afraid the only witty riposte I can come up with is, "D'you want to come over here and say that, you snivelling little suck-butt?" What I would really like to say, though, is that the only part of your letter that makes the least bit of sense is where you say you've got no body hair. I think I believed that bit.**

KRIS KROS ARE BEAUTIFUL

Dear YOB
I have heard distant rumours about there being a Sonic 3. Will it really be a three-player? I hope so. My friend Kevin has Altered Beast 2. He says it is really good



We couldn't read the name on this one, but we still like it.

so where can I buy it? Do you think there's any chance of Super Ted on the Master System? My heroes are Take That! Do they like computers? I do. I buy your wicked magazine every month, unless I've lost my pocket money. My friend Kev wants to do swopsies for my new Megadrive and four games for his Game Boy with the brill games Ferrari Grand Prix, Double Dragon II and Speedball 4. My daddy says I shouldn't but Uncle Gareth and Auntie Gladys say Kevin is really generous and reliable. What do you think I should do? Please tell me do you like Kris Kros? They're also my heroes.
Mark Clift, Tonbridge, Kent
YOB:Hmm. I think you've got a little confused Mark. You see, this is the planet Earth. The address you're in fact after is Vorg City, the planet Glak, somewhere out there at the remote end of the universe.

YOB 4 MRS SHELLEY

Dear YOB
Is that wedding bells I can hear? Are you and Mrs. Shelley finally going to tie the knot? Some might say you're like chalk and cheese, but here at the asylum we believe you will make a lovely couple. So strong are we in our beliefs that we took the liberty of sending you this list of arrangements:
Rad and Gus = bridesmaids
Rich = vicar (**??? — Rich**)
Oz = choir boy
Jaz = Best man
Paul, Andy and Tom = In charge of the buffet.
One last thing, will Jazza get a hair cut for this very special occasion?
Tim Blackwell and the Loones, Carlisle, Cumbria
YOB: Tsk. Poor old Rad, it's always the same. Always the bridesmaid, never the bride.

IT'S ONLY A GAME!

Dear YOB
I know this whole argument is wearing a bit thin but I may as well throw my oar in about all of this 'console games are ruining kids' business. The problem as far as I can see is basically one of extremes. On one side you've got neo-facist Christians arguing that its the work of the devil, and on the other, people insisting on playing their consoles endlessly. Like most answers, this one lies in moderation. I think my Megadrive is great fun, but it doesn't rule my entire existence. Neither do I think by playing it I am in some way passing over to the dark side or getting vicious ideas. As usual though, it's the loud minority making the fuss. Get a grip and enjoy yourself! It's only a game!
Mark Walsh, Harpenden, Herts
**YOB: Um, absolutely right there, Mark. Can't argue with that at all. Just a game. Yep. How true.
Yes. You were certainly right about this whole argument wearing thin. I could do with a new scandal to write about now. Erm... "GASEOUS EMISSIONS FROM SONIC THE HEDGEHOG CONTRIBUTING TO HOLE IN OZONE LAYER LEADING SCIENTISTS CLAIM"? How about, "INCREASE IN POVERTY LINKED TO SEGA'S MEGA-CD PRICING POLICY"? Operator? Get me the Editor of The Sun!**



The best piece of artwork we've ever had in ever ever. Many many cheers to Tom Percival of Bishop's Castle, Shrops for this

FIT TO BURST!

Dear YOB
To all those people out there who call themselves scientists, 'computer epilepsy' is a bad name to use. It is called that because old people have got something against video games. I am not just writing this to promote video games as I myself suffer from the allergy they call 'computer epilepsy'. I have had four epileptic seizures. They have all been caused by flickering computers, or should I say television screens. All of these screens were being used by computers, but that is coincidental. These kind of seizures are not just caused by computer/television screens. They can be triggered by sunlight reflecting off metallic surfaces, disco lights, sunlight reflecting on water etc. So old fashioned people with a grudge against video games, get your facts right!
Phil Davies, Shrewsbury, Shropshire
YOB: I'm as much against people bearing grudges as the next YOB, and I know you're right about certain people being sensitive to all kinds of flickering light sources, but, blimey Phil, are you telling me that you still play video games in spite of the fact that you've already had four seizures while playing? Call me very old fashioned, but I would have thought that if they have a tendency to trigger your epilepsy it would be wise to give them a miss? I mean, I



don't think you want to screw your brain up, because that's your second most important organ and it definitely comes in useful in later life. If you ever get that far.

I AM THE MASTERRRRR!!

Dear YOB
I was glad to see that there was actually a Master System game previewed at the back of the mag! In all the time I've been reading MEAN MACHINES SEGA I have never seen a Master System game previewed. But in mag no.6 there were three games, Rainbow Islands, James Bond and Krusty's Fun House, which were given a full page. Good stuff! I was disappointed though to see that the Master System's part of the Games Index had been axed.
1ST PARA:*Richie McKillop, Ballymena, Co. Antrim, N. Ireland*
1ST PARA:***YOB: Sorry, Richie, but it's definitely starting to look like Master System releases are gradually winding down as more and more people upgrade to Megadrives. With less games coming out it naturally gives us less Master System stuff to write about, but when a good MS title comes along we'll give it as much space in the mag as possible, as I hope you'll have seen from the last couple of issues.***

WHAT A SELF-OPINIONATED GIT!

Dear YOB
After owning a Super NES for 9 months I decided to get rid of it and get a Megadrive so that I could get the Mega-CD when it eventually comes out. Anyway, I bought issue 6 of MMS and saw a letter from Sion Wyn Owen defending the price of games and all I can say is that they are talking a load of crap. Let's face it, when a shop or mail order company can get Streetfighter II from America, pay the shipping costs, pay import duty and still sell it for a tenner less than the official version, you know you're getting ripped off for official games.
As for the point about a melted-down BMW, of course it isn't worth much. What's the use of a melted-down BMW?! If you melted a cartridge down it



Mr Anonymous sent this in. Cor, isn't it great, hey? Thanks a lot.

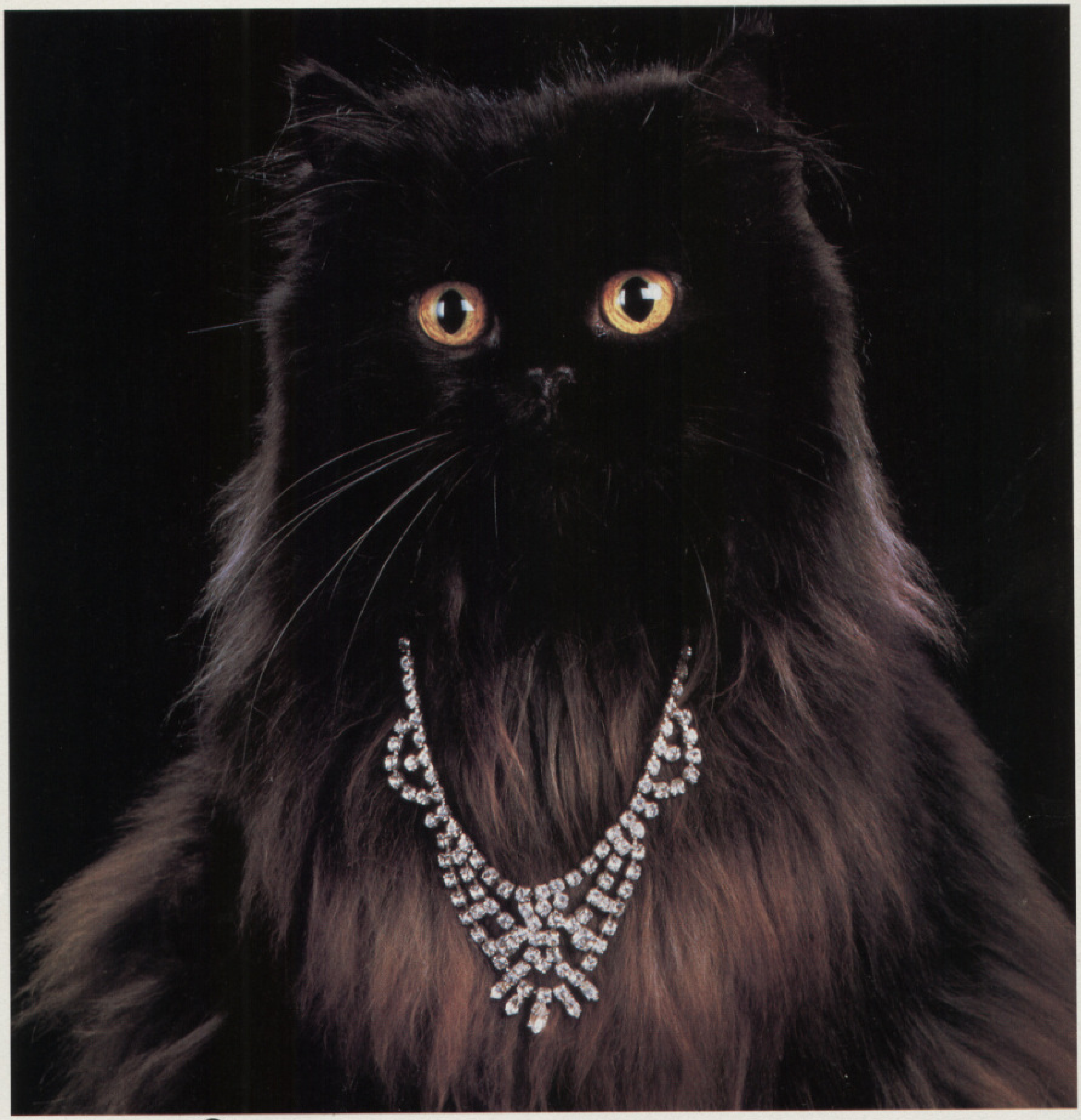
would probably be worth about 20p.
Right, enough of that. I read you letter from Mrs. Shelley going on about how bad video games are. While I disagree with this, I can see where she's coming from. For instance, if you've been playing Street Fighter II on level 7 and got to M. Bison without losing a round and then you get your ass whipped, you don't say something like "Oh damn and blast, now I'll have to try again" do you? You're more likely to shout a load of four letter words and throw your joypad at the wall. (Well I would, and it cost me about £80 in replacement joypads). Well, by now you're probably thinking "What a self-opinionated git" but that comes from reading your section of the mag so much.
Peter 'Baz' Bailey, Willenhall, West Midlands
YOB: What a self-opinionated git.

MUTE CABBAGE SPEAKS!

Dear YOB
I am Grarg the Destroyer! I have come from the distant land of Venmorf to seek out the evil Daygar! I am the strongest, most powerful warrior in the galaxy! Myself and Sheeko, the tough yet scantily-clad she-warrior have mounted our fiery steeds and set forth to do battle. The task is a great one. Daygar grows stronger by the day and we must first wield our colossal swords and use every rippling muscle in our bodies to slay his henchmen! May the power of God Kracah be with us!...Sorry my mistake. I am in fact Keith Welk, I am 14 years old, I haven't got a social life, I wouldn't know what to say to a girl if she threw herself at me, I am six stone and I am about as interesting as a mute cabbage. I am good at games however but would like to get a life.
Keith Welk, Professional Gaming Spod.
YOB: Keith Welk? WELK? If I were you, "Keith", I'd definitely stick to calling yourself Grarg the Destroyer. You know changing your name by deed poll these days is an inexpensive, painless and hygenic operation, and besides, it would give you something to talk about when a girl throws herself at you. Believe me, this one simple act could change your life.

ARE SEGA RIPPING OFF THE KIDS? OR WHAT?

Dear YOB
My son thinks his Megadrive is wonderful, and when he heard of the forthcoming Mega-CD, he wanted one. He went without Christmas and birthday presents, having money instead to put towards the Mega-CD. Last week THE DAY arrived. He expected to pay around £200, but it was £270, but the cost didn't matter really because, as far as he was concerned, he was getting seven "free" games with it that would have incredible graphics, sound, and loads of levels (worth around £250 in Megadrive games) - this would keep him occupied for months. Dixons have advertised the Mega-CD with a photo showing 7 new games, which you would expect to receive with your purchase. It does state, however, in small print, that "games may vary". This covers them for misleading advertising because in fact out of seven games included, five are old Megadrive games put onto disc which you probably had and sold months ago. The other two are new but mediocre.
My son has put on a brave face and said it's great, after saving for so long, but personally I think it's another Sega rip-off. I'd like to know how Sega warrant the price tag. You can buy a music CD for under £100 with CDs themselves around £13 each, which cost very little to produce. This machine is only as good as its games, and if it is capable of wonderful things then why on earth couldn't Sega have treated the poor kids, who are spending nearly £300, to some free games to stop them feeling they've thrown all their savings down the pan.
Carol Pinder, Dronfield
YOB: What can I say? A heart-rending tale indeed. I agree with a lot of what you say, but not everyone is like your son. For instance, not every Megadrive owner has played, finished and sold the games on the Classics disc so I'm sure there are some Mega-CD owners who are getting plenty of fun out of it. Likewise, the other two games — not outstanding but fun to play.
I expect the pricing of CD games will be much talked about as more and more people take to CD games (I can see last Christmas' "Dear Editor of The Sun, Why do these bloody console games cost so much? Angry Parent", happening all over again this Christmas). However, the Mega-CD is more sophisticated than your bog-standard £100 audio CD player and a similar piece of equipment for, say, an IBM PC would cost well over £300 so Sega's pricing isn't that unrealistic.
I think the worst thing about the Mega-CD is that people may at the moment be wondering why they bothered buying one, simply because the games they've got don't seem to be any great improvement over the old cartridge stuff. Give it a couple of months, though, and you should find games like Final Fight should rekindle your son's enthusiasm for his Mega-CD.



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METHOD: Mix the meat with sage leaves, onions, butter and parmesan. Season, then refrigerate for 30 minutes. Form the paste into small grungy balls and brown. When cooked, pour the wine over and serve in the savoury 'A La Cat' gravy.


MEGA DRIVE
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ELECTRONIC ARTS

IF IT'S IN THE GAME, IT'S IN THE GAME

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Q+A

This month, Jaz has gone away on a great management course where he scales mountains, has long chats by a big log fire and reveals his true feelings to a bunch of like-minded managers in Bishop's Stortford. Smart eh? Well, that means that the letter-answering chores have gone over to Rich, who this month clambers into Jazza's capacious answering trousers — which mystically endow him with all consoles-related knowledge. If you've got any queries, send 'em in to Jaz at DICK GEES' Q+A, MEAN MACHINES, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

LIP GLOSS

Dear Jazza
I am relying on your seemingly endless knowledge to answer these few questions.
1. A few months ago Mega mag said that some boffs in Japan had found ways of increasing the Megadrive's palette of colours. Is this true?
2. Where can I get a Sega rave top?
3. When will the fighting joypad and the game Real Fighters be released?
Thanks a lot and keep churning out the info that makes me seem like a Guru to my friends.
Louis Hayward, Mildenhall, Suffolk

RICH: 1. Some technical jiggery pockery may be able to get more colours on-screen, but the Megadrive's actual palette can't be increased without extra hardware — I have that information from one of the UK's top developers. So there. 2. You can't, unless you mean those Sonic tops which are available in the shops. 3. You what? If you mean the six button joypad, that'll be out the same time as Street Fighter II.

EYE LINER

Dear Jazza
Please can you help me out with a few answers.
1. My friend went to America on holiday in November 1992. He said he played Streetfighter 2 on the Megadrive and it was really slow. Is this true or is he just lying?
2. Is Streetfighter 2 coming out soon? Why haven't we seen any pictures of it?
3. In one of my magazines it says Super Star Wars and Contra Spirits are coming out on the Megadrive. How in the hell will it do the mode 7 graphics?
Stephen Rogers, Chaplefields, Coventry

RICH: 1. Why you'd want to be friends with someone who speaks out of his backside is beyond me. 2. There's pics of it in the news section, which puts paid to the sad remarks being made by certain ill-informed fanzines... 3. It won't. Star Wars from US Gold is coming out, but it isn't Super Star Wars. Contra Spirits, if it is coming out, will be on Mega-CD which has a mode 7 effect that's actually more impressive than the Super NES mode — check out the forthcoming Thunderhawk if you don't believe me. Oh whoops you can't because it's not out until August. Oh well, just take my word for it.

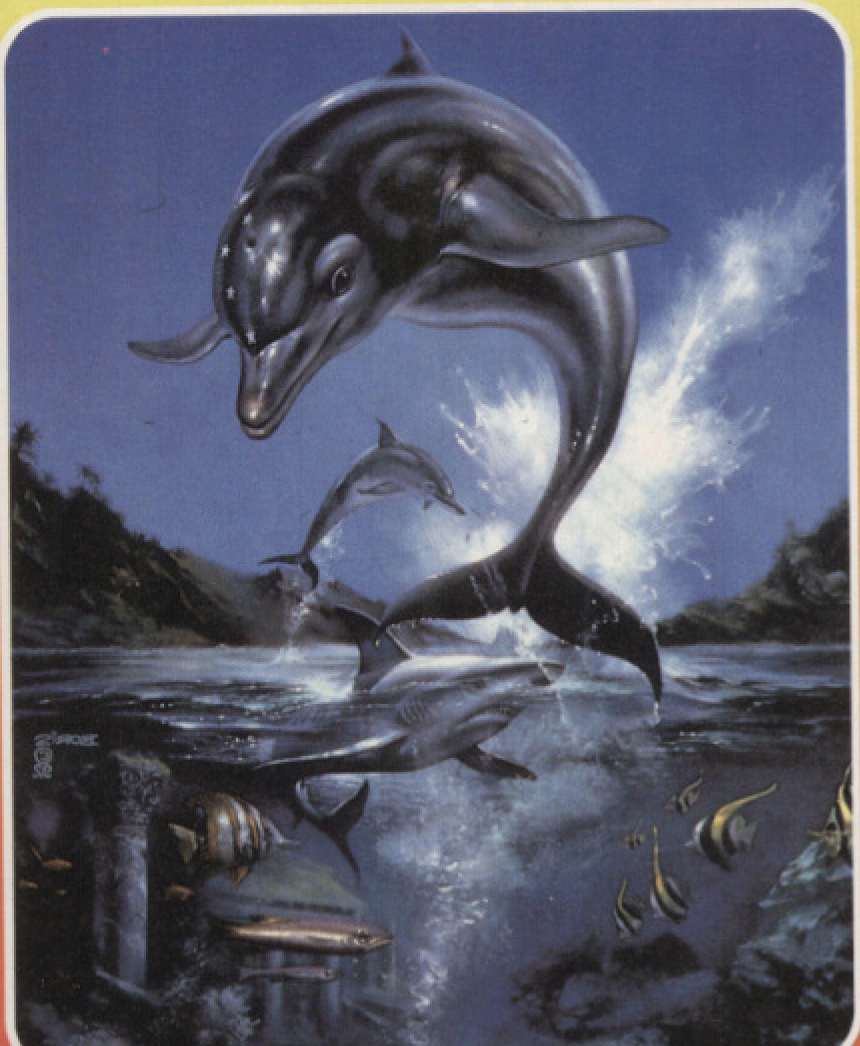
LIPSTICK

Dear Jaz
Could you please answer these questions about my Megadrive before I make a ghastly error?
1. Is Super Kick Off worth buying or should I get European Club Soccer instead?
2. I own Road Rash 2. Is it worth getting another quality racing game i.e. Monaco 2?
3. Are there any early plans to release Total Carnage on the Megadrive or am I stuck with Smash T.V.?
4. Is there going to be a Sonic 3 or have the Sonic team ran out of ideas?
5. Which is the best and second best, Ecco, Robocod or John Madden's 93?
6. Are there any plans for Sega releasing a 32-bit console after the official release of WonderMega? That 'ud leave Nintendo gutted!
Marcus Hastings, Birkenhead, Wirral

RICH: 1. Get Super Kick Off. Euro Club Soccer is decidedly cacky in comparison. 2. If you must. 3. For the moment, you're stuck with Smash. 4. Is the Pope catholic? Sonic 3 is on the way, but CD Sonic (Sonic Through Time) should be out first. 5. Ecco's the best and then Robocod probably. John Madden '92 is better than '93 and Robocod though. 6. There isn't going to be an official release of the WonderMega, but plans are afoot for a 32-bit machine. I know a lot more, but I'm not telling you.







DARREN

Dear Jaz
Please could you answer these questions about my Game Gear.
1. Can avoid getting dust inside the screen of the Game Gear?
2. Will you be able to get a Game Genie for the Game Gear? If not, why is this?
3. It is possible to play Master System games on the Game Gear, but is it possible to play Megadrive games now or in the future?
4. Is there a set of stereo speakers that attaches to the Game Gear?
5. Will there be as many accessories for the Game Gear as there is for the Game Boy?
6. What do you think are the three best games on the Game Gear?
Nigel Hughes, Hertfordshire
RICH: 1. Yes, by keeping it in a competely sterile environment (like an airtight glass case) which sort of defeats the object really. 2. Apparently yes. 3. If Megadrive games could be played on the Game Gear, don't you think that Game Gear games might look a tad more impressive? 4. Any set of speakers with a 3.5mm jack will do. 5. Probably not. 6. Didn't you read the MEAN MACHINES Top Ten Game Gear chart a couple of months ago? Obviously not...

BLUSHER

Dear Jaz
This Mega-CD business has got me stumped. I own a Japanese Megadrive and I am considering buying a Mega-CD. I would be obliged if you could answer my questions as no one else can.
1. Will I have to buy a Japanese Mega-CD as I have a Japanese Megadrive?
2. Will the games you have reviewed such as Sewer Shark and Night Trap be compatible with a Japanese Mega-CD or will I have to buy Japanese games?
3. What is the difference between the British and Japanese Mega-CD?
4. What is the price of the Japanese Mega-CD? Still £269.99?
5. If I brought the Japanese Mega-CD what would I get with it?
Rob Harper, Whitstable, Kent
RICH: Right okay, let's clear this up right now. If you own a Jap Megadrive, you're going to have to send it away to an importer to have switches added — IF you want to use a UK or USA Mega-CD. Using different combinations of switches you can use ANY Mega-CD with it, Jap, USA or UK. However, if you have a Jap Mega-CD, you'll have to use Jap CDs, USA Mega-CDs need USA games and so on. However, Advanced Console Entertainment do a conversion that enables you to play foreign games on your Mega-CD. Call them on 071 439 1185. It's all a bit complicated, but I'm sure you understand.

FOUNDATION

Dear Jazza
I own a Master System and a Game Gear and would like to ask some questions that have been on my mind for ages.
1. Will Chakan or Streets of Rage II be released on the Master System or Game Gear?
2. It says that Mortal Kombat will be released on the Game Gear in your 1993 release list. If so when will it be out?
3. When will the T2 games be released for the Game Gear?
4. I've heard that T2 the Arcade game will be released on the Master System. If so, will it be for the light gun?
Warren Hogan, Beeston, Leeds
RICH: 1. Chakan's out on the Game Gear, but don't expect a Master System version for ages. Don't hold your breath for Streets of Rage II.

MASCARA

Dear Jazza
Please please answer these questions before I go nuts;
1. Now that Capcom have started making Sega games, will Darkwing Duck be released on the Megadrive or Mega-CD.
2. Is there a Garfield game planned for the Megadrive or the Mega-CD?
3. Are there any Disney or Looney Tunes games coming out for the Mega-CD, and if so which ones?
4. When will Alien be released on the Mega-CD?
Ross Allan, Stapeley, Nantwich
RICH: 1, 2 and 3. Nope. 4. Next year if at all. Acclaim have the licence to Alien 3 and they're only producing a small amount of Mega-CD games, like Mortal Kombat and WWF.

EYE SHADOW

Dear Jaz

Please can you answer these questions.
1. Will there ever be a Game Genie for the Master System?
2. When is Pitfighter coming out for the Master System and when will you be reviewing it?
3. Will Streets of Rage come out on the Master System?
4. What is the best shoot em' up on the Master System?
5. Why don't you do more tips for the Master System?
6. Why can't you do write in competitions instead of phone in ones?
Sion Bonett, Cardiff
RICH: 1. Perhaps. 2. Dunno. 3. There's a review this issue if you can bothered to look. 4. Um... R-Type's pretty damn good. 5. Because you lot don't send in many Master System tips. 6. We don't do phone in compos. The only ones in the mag are actually advertisments. We will be doing more write-in compos though, so relax.





TIPS

Greetings paupers, and welcome to this month's richer-than-life tips section. Of course, I don't actually play these games myself, although I gather they are rather fashionable among the less cultured classes. No, daddy bought a man to play them for me, leaving me with more spare time for my studies. However, many people do have the most frightful problems with their games, which is what this section is about. Or so I gather, I wouldn't actually know, I only read the Times. Well, the cartoons anyway. Of course, some of you may not have their little man to rely on when it comes to besting games, so it's only natural that in your own way you would try to help one another by sending cheats for recently released games in to columns such as this, often in the hope of financial recompense to the tune of, oh say £150 worth of software, which is, naturally, the sort of money I lose down the back of a luxury leather suite in change. If you'd care to participate in the proceedings, you may write to the I WISH I HAD A JOLLY WHIZZO TUCK BOX TIPS SECTION, MEAN MACHINES SEGA, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AU. then again, perhaps you could have a wash.

WHERE IN TIME IS CARMEN SAN DIEGO?

Aah, edutainment. Of course, a lot of people may not be able to afford ridiculous school fees, so one supposes games like this are a good way for the educationally underprivileged to fill in the gaping blanks in their knowledge. Of course, some people may still be over-challenged by such tricky questions as "Where did El Grico the Spaniard come form?", so it's fortunate Grant Cameron of Lenzie, Glasgow has sent in these codes so you can at least pretend to have the expensive tutorial advantages of your peers.



ACE TIME DETECTIVE: LHMNGF

CAPTURE CARMEN: MJDFPDG

SUPER TIME SLEUTH: MJDFSGG

SUPER ENDING: JHBHHXS





Twinkle Tale

No, not the story of raiding the tuck shop of light, fluffy angel cakes, but that dashed foreign shooting game. Well, not shooting *game*, it's not that refined enough to feature pheasant slaughtering, it's a game where you shoot lots of other things. Anyway that's by the by, for Gary Young has sent in a stage select cheat for it. Start the game, wait until the story book appears and then hold UP/LEFT with buttons A and C and then press START to pick your starting stage. Pip pip for Master Young.

EURO CLUB SOCCER

I always found soccer an unruly game played by ruffians. I far prefer the more genteel pastimes of cricket, rugger, leapfrog or hunt the soap. However, no doubt some of the less cultured amongst you might have been inclined to purchase a football simulator such as Euro Club Soccer for your Megadrive, perhaps because you're of Bunter-esque proportions and running around the real playing fields gets you all red and sweaty. Still, if you'd like to achieve every working-class schoolboys dream and play in the quarter-finals against Arsenal, playing for an unknown team just enter



PIECES OF EIGHT

on the code screen. Robert Hogg of Altrincham in Cheshire (where Cheshire Life comes from) is responsible for that jolly wheeze.

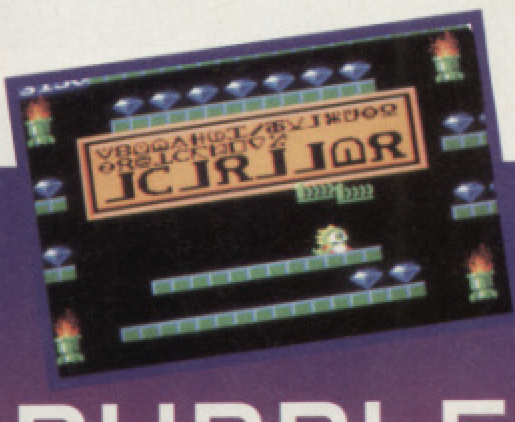


WIMBLEDON TENNIS

This is more like it, what ho, the thwack of balls against racquets, the agonised screaming of the male competitors, buying portions of strawberries and cream, getting your house repossessed shortly afterwards. Ahh, tennis at Wimbledon is a wonderful occasion. Of course, tennis is a game requiring no mean measure of skill, which is something young Paul Casey obviously has in abundance, for he has supplied this spanking beano strategy for Wimbledon Tennis on the Master System. When serving on your player's right hand side of the court, opt for a looping serve. As soon as you hit the ball move into the centre of the court, Your opponent misses this shot every time, leaving you with a whizz-bang spiffing wangle of a point on every occasion.

LEMMINGS

Sean Thomas from Southend-on-Sea in Essex understands Lemmings perfectly well, especially for someone from a seaside town, and he has sent us a level select cheat for the Master System version of the game. To start with, hold down buttons 1 and 2. Then rotate the D-pad until you hear a "dink" noise (the same as when the cursor highlights a skill), this should take about twenty rotations. Now go to the level change box on the title screen to select a level. Go to the NEW LEVEL box and a screen appears with the credits and level select on. Press button 2 to leave the screen. Whatever level you selected last is now in the memory and ready for action, as it were.



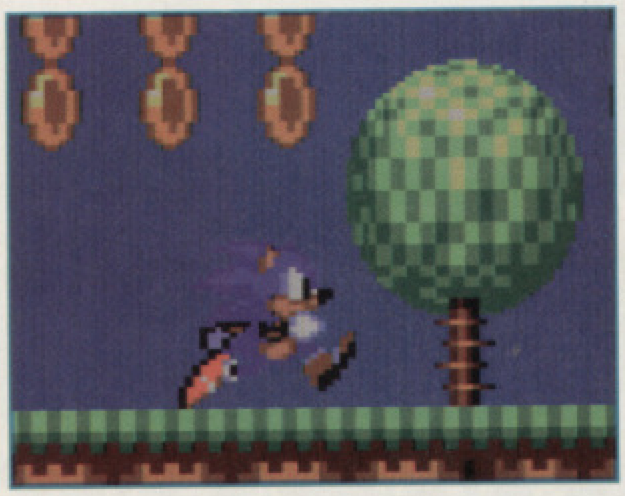


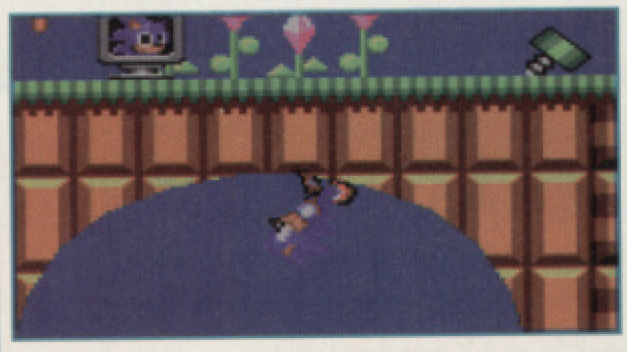
BUBBLE BOBBLE

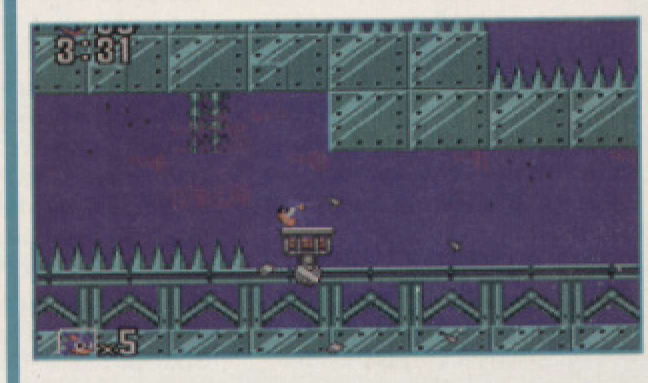
This game must be older than Mr Grimblethorpe the history master, but Alan Dunlop from Ayrshire in Scotland has sent in a cheat for Bubble Bobble for all you peasants who are too poor to have been able to afford a new game in all this time. Entering 3VV35NLLE in the code screen allows the player to select any level between 1 and 99. Hip hip hoorah to Alan for that.

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG 2

Oh what fun we have with hedgehogs here at Crippington Manor School For Toffs. Why, I remember the time we put put four of them in matron's pillow. Ho ho, how we laughed when we saw her the next day with her eyes poked out! And sometimes, we like to take hedgehogs, cover them in castor oil and... and Richard Malham from Bromley in Kent has a fine and topping cheat for the Master System version of Sonic 2. It's a level select, and it's activated as such, when you see the Sega logo disappear, press UP/LEFT and both buttons on control pad 2, and hold them down for twelve seconds. Then hold down UP/RIGHT for five seconds. Now switch back to UP/LEFT and the two buttons, When Dr Robotnik goes off the top right of the oval hold down UP/RIGHT and the two buttons until Sonic and Tails appear. Plug your pad into port one and press button two and a level select should appear. I say, that's as complicated as my triple algy homework.







GAME GEAR TIPS

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG 2

Hedgehogs again, why that reminds me of the time Porkins was being caned for flicking inky pellets around in class. He stuffed four hedgehogs down the seat of his pants to protect himself from the harsh blows, but the silly ass put them the wrong way round, and matron spent the next three days picking spines out of his backside! What a jape! But anyway, James Newbury from Eastleigh in Hants has a tip for gaining quite some number of lives in the Game Gear version of this game. At Green Hill Zone 1, stop just before the first loop and you'll find a ramp. Spin off this and press right. You should spin onto an extra life on top of the first loop. Now stop before you fall off the top, go left and you should once again see the 1-UP, which has replaced itself! Go back the way you came, back up the ramp and repeat the process to collect lots and lots of lives. Zingo!

SHINOBI 2

Michael Savva from Basildon in Essex has sent in a code for this game. Golly! A code! Perhaps it'll lead us to the smugglers' cove hideout where all their booty is hidden! I'd best tell Aunt Meg to telephone the police straight away! Oh dear, sorry, it's just these jolly exciting Boy's Own Adventure Stories book I've been reading. Anyway, Michael says that if you enter the code

9F8BB

you'll start the game with five rescued ninjas, five recovered crystals and ten (I say, count them) energy blocks. Huzzah!

WONDERBOY III

That's funny, I've never heard of that chap. I know Simpkins Junior, Cringeworthy 2 and Lord Harpington Fauntleroy VI, but not Wonderboy III. Anyway, Philip Walker has a string of tips to help anyone having trouble with this game based around the thrilling adventures of Wonderboy. First of all, enter the password

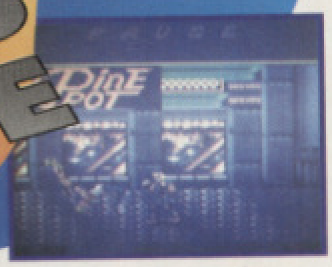
WE5T ONE 0000 000

and you'll start off in the village between two trees. At this point go right until you come to a door, which you should enter. Go over to the grey block you see and hit it with your sword, collect the white question mark which leaps out at this juncture and a secret door appears. Go through here and you land on a pad which changes you into a different creature. Keep on jumping in the air to change until you transform into a Lion Man. Now go back through the door, stand next to the grey block and push UP. You enter a secret orange and yellow blocks room. Select the Thunderbolt with button 2. Go through the door in this room and you confront the Dragon King himself. Thunderbolt him to death, collect the blue cross he drops and - hip pip tootle - you've completed the game!

STREETS OF RAGE

Pater told me about these places, they're in the north of England, in the ghettos of Yorkshire, and there's all these criminals with guns running around the place, and it all sounds dashed frightful. Still, Keith Shaw from Penrith in Cumbria has found a way to make this no-doubt highly realistic study of ghetto life in a mining village somewhat easier. On the options screen play tracks 00 and 01, and then press both buttons whilst playing track 11. Two more options should now appear on screen, giving you access to a level select and an infinite lives and time cheat.





CHUCK

Ah, Charles Rock, a name with some breeding and status at last, unlike the rather uncouthly-titled Paul Fathers from Bognor Regis in West Sussex, who has graciously decided to send in a complete set of level codes for this prehistoric platform title.

LEVEL 2: 7GO9M
LEVEL 3: NN6E3
LEVEL 4:84AKC

GAME GENIE TIPS

ROLO TO THE RESCUE

Mark from the Hornby Hobbies Game Genie Hotline is an awfully decent chap, and he's given us another exclusive Game Genie code. This one's for Rolo to the Rescue, and it grants infinite lives, invincibility and a completely full map. The code itself is

DJ8A ADYE.

However, there are some special instructions to remember. To start with, when you enter the code, be sure the Game Genie is turned off. Enter the code and press START (with the Game Genie still deactivated). When Rolo and his friends walk on screen turn on the Game Genie and press START again. The screen should now go black. Press A and the game resets to the title screen. Turn the Game Genie off and press START one last time to activate that cheat. Spango!

HOW TO KNACKER YOUR MEGADRIVE IN ONE EASY LESSON

"Here's a cheat which can turn Revenge of Shinobi into The Super Shinobi, which is basically the same game." says David Curran. "First put in any Sega cartridge which is made by Sega and not a third party licensee, and when the Sega logo appears pull it out without turning your machine off, making sure the Sega logo is still on screen, then put in Revenge of Shinobi and press reset." Well, if you fancy running the risk of completely destroying your Megadrive for absolutely no reason, this tip is certainly for you.

"I'D NEVER HAVE THOUGHT OF THAT" ABSTRACT TIP OF THE MONTH

Mark Reeves of Abbey Wood, London says: "At the end of each level keep punching the end person and you will beat them easily without getting hurt." Oh, is that the time, er...I must dash for, erm...prep..

COMPUTER COMPETITION

Win 1 of 10 of each of these amazing computer games



WIN A SEGA MEGA DRIVE

MEGA DRIVE – The Sega Mega Drive is the ultimate computer game console, fully utilizing for the first time the awesome power of the latest 16 bit technology. **MEGA GRAPHICS** – The Sega Mega Drive reproduces the graphic quality of specially designed arcade machines costing many times as much. **MEGA SOUND** – The Sega Mega Drive even has real stereo sound, making the greatest games even greater.

Qustion: Finish this name – Sonic the ....

Answer:
A) Hampster
B) Horse
C) Hedgehog

Phone **0338 422052**



WIN A SUPER NINTENDO STREET FIGHTER II

Super Nintendo is the most advanced entertainment system with dazzling 3D graphics, spectacular colour and digital stereo sound; and includes the new game Street Fighter II, the worlds greatest arcade hit.

Question: Where do Sumo Wrestlers come from?

Answer: A) America B) Japan C) Australia

Phone **0338 422042**

Children under 18 must seek parents or guardians permission before telephoning



WIN A SEGA GAME GEAR

The portable, hand held Game Gear is in full colour, with an amazing 3.2" back lit LCD screen, which brings arcade style graphics to life in 32 brilliant colours. The Game Gear includes 4 awesome games.

Question: How many games come in this Sega Game Gear?

Answer: A) 40 B) 4 C) 15

Phone **0338 422062**

No responsibility can be accepted for entries not properly recorded. Calls are charged 36p a minute at cheap rate and 48p a minute at all other times.

No correspondence, No alternative prizes. The judges decision is final. Winners will be notified by post.

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Allow up to 28 days for delivery.



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Post to: Q&Q Ltd, Gild House, Bournemouth, BH2 6HW.

Name ____________________

Address ____________________

____

Signature of Guardian (If under 18) ____________________

My First choice game is ____________________

My Second choice game is ____________________

My Third choice game is ____________________

I enclose cheque ☐ Postal Order ☐ for £5 and one of my existing games for my computer system. Sega Mega Drive ☐ Game Gear ☐ Master System ☐ Super Nintendo ☐ Nintendo Gameboy ☐

If you are not completely satisfied, we will send the game you exchanged back to you.

SEGA

Nintendo

MEGA-LO-

Mega-Lo-Mania is probably one of the best strategy games since Chess, full of depth and constantly giving opportunities for developing tactics of your own. Gus has taken the mechanics of the game apart, and offers his guide to giving good conquest, and triumphing in every epoch, as well as passwords for the first half of the game.

QUANTUM LEAP

The most important factor when playing Mega-Lo-Mania, is to do it economically. You have unlimited attempts to conquer each island, so in that sense you cannot 'die'. However, if you waste a lot of men on an epoch you could have sailed through, you're storing trouble for later epochs. Remember, every man you don't employ in one epoch is carried forward to future epochs. Generally, the smaller the island, the larger the number of men needed, since the armies of your opponent find you earlier.









EARLY TACTICS

You should tackle the first three epochs in a different manner to the rest. On these nine islands you have the advantage over the computer players in terms of reproduction. Therefore, you should aim to overwhelm your opponents before they even have time to develop a weapon. The first epoch should be won with 15-20 men on each island, with 20-25 on the next two epochs. First select a good sector, and develop an offensive weapon. With that weapon form an army of your entire population and attack. On the first two epochs victory is virtually ensured.

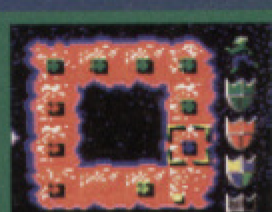
ELEMENTARY, WATSON

Elements are the keys to easy victories. Elements come in two varieties, free and mined. Free elements are found on early epochs, and gather at a specific rate determined by your Tech Level - not by any number of people. Mined elements are collected at a rate determined by the number of people employed mining them. So, clearly making items which use free elements is preferable to those using mined elements. Bear in mind that more powerful items always used mined elements. The distribution of elements is the same every game - so a map is provided here of the first three epochs, with symbols indicating how good as a starting area it is.











ELEMENTS TOO

You can see what a design consists of by checking the blue scroll in the left hand corner. Increase the amount of people mining an element that is used in greater quantities. Sometimes a low power item, like a bow or ballista, uses a large amount of one element, say five or six units. This is bad, as the element will quickly deplete. You can bin a formula if it is too unbalanced in elements, and then order a second design, but this takes time and effort, so only do it if you have a wide range of other elements that may replace it. Also, don't waste effort mining elements that aren't used in any formulas, there are a few suspect examples of red-herring minerals. Lastly, you can quickly see which elements are exhausted as the arrow from them to the spade disappears. If the element is crucial, either commission a new design, or move house

MANIA PLAYERS GUIDE



GO FORTH AND MULTIPLY

Having some people do nothing at all is quite beneficial. The unused pool is located in the centre of the flow diagram. At the beginning of each round, leave about ten people unused. That's enough to get a good reproductive cycle going. As the level passes fifteen, syphon off the extra into design or mining. If you abandon a sector (see abandon), leave a core of people to breed.



DESIGN

Everyone knows the virtues of good design, but this isn't Ikea. Design does two good things. It gives you items to use, and also increases your tech level. The first priority is always an offensive weapon. If someone attacks you early on, you have a means of defence. In the first epoch it's not a good idea to 'skip' a weapon design for something better, but after that you may go straight to a pike or bow, provided the island is big enough to give you a breathing space. By the third and fourth epochs you should be designing shields. These are useful because they rarely use vital elements, and are instrumental in delaying your opponent. Obviously, the more people in design, the faster it works, but as the clock reaches one or two turns left, don't swamp it with any more people, as they are of little use. Never stop a design process if you can help it.

BRANCHING OUT

For the first three epochs, you should be able to win from a single sector. The weakness of your opponents lies in the way they spread across several sectors, allowing you to sweep through in a series of lightning wins. However, from epoch four, you will be forced to branch out. Use the map to see what sectors are good as second bases, as you will arrive at a higher tech level. Your initial base soon begins to run out of elements. Take most of the people and set up elsewhere. Remember you cannot settle in an empty sector if you are in an alliance, so break that first. It's best to choose an empty sector, and not fight for possession of one, as that usually provokes a counter attack. Once you have more than one base, and several factories, use the infinite production run option. Instead of building a fixed amount of guns or planes, the production run proceeds until one of the elements runs out. Make sure that the rate of mining of the elements exceeds the building in the factory, or the run will end prematurely. Once you have the knack, you can have several sectors in production at once. In the middle epochs of the game the rule is to produce now, attack later.



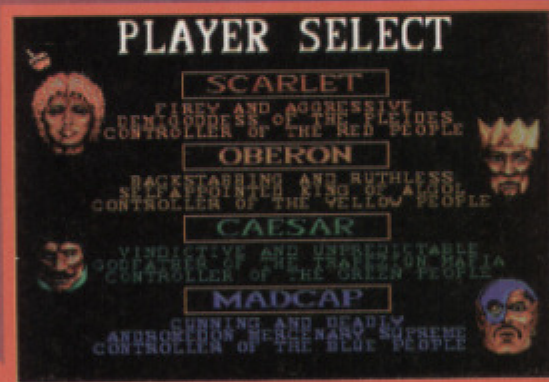
▲ ***Using these tips perhaps you can get this far into the game. Here we see that Gus has got advanced technology, including bi-planes, attackingan opponent's 15th century base!***

MEGA-LO-MANIA
PLAYERS GUIDE

ABANDONING

This tactic is used to waste the enemy's resources, by attacking a sector that is of no use to you. If a sector is out of elements, get the people to make several shields, put defences on the roof, then evacuate the rest. When the enemy attacks, keep replacing the shields and defences every so often. This pins his army down instead of producing or mining.







LIBERAL ALLIANCES

Of course, you should try to make alliances, but pick the right partner. Always go for the closest to yourself first, as any other hostile person has to pass through them. Even if they initially refuse, keep trying at ten second intervals — persistance often reaps rewards. Only break an alliance if your partner becomes too powerful. Power isn't shown be the amount of sectors he controls, but by the tech level of his core sector. Having defences on the roof is usually a good sign that he's too big for his boots. In that event, break any alliance and try to recruit his adversaries.

BATTLE ROYAL

When you fight, it should be decisively. Don't divide your armies unless they are massively powerful. A common misconception is that a few advanced machines can overrun a lot of cavemen, but numbers play a large part in the game, so you should be aiming to have a groundswell over a hundred or so footmen as well as the machines.Always react to an invasion of your territory with a big force, don't rely on defences for two reasons. Firstly, by the time it takes your men on the roof to get all the invaders, you've probably sustained a lot of damage. Secondly, you should always try to play the game at the fastest speed setting, which is a bit risky when others are in your sector (leave the auto slow on).





FINAL TACTICS

The watchword is economy. Don't use any more time than you have to. If you can win with guns, don't bother with planes. As the levels proceed, much of your time is spent building mines and labs. Don't build a lab in a sector which you have already used extensively for manufacture — it won't have enough elements to produce its own designs. And finally, get them before they get you! Once scarlet's army starts knocking on your door, it's basically all over.

CODES:EPOCH 2:LUDDAXCRHTT
EPOCH 3: MLNDATXJQTF
EPOCH 4:DZXBGEUXWNH
EPOCH 5:ZSFCAJOSXND

JAGUA XJ22



So that's what editors do with their ill-gotten gains... spend it all on new fangled Mega-CDs and stuff... hmmmm. Well, thanks to Sega (for the CDs) and Rich's massive pay packet (You what? — Rich), here are some amazing Jaguar XJ220 tips!

TRANSMISSIONS TACTICS

You have the choice of either a manual gearbox or an automatic one. Here at MEAN MACHINES, we recommend that you should ditch the automatic box straight away and get all the practice you can with the manual shift. Changing gear manually gives you many advantages. First of all, it improves your rate of acceleration. This gives your XJ220 an unbeatable advantage in that the computer cars can no longer pull away quicker than you. It's also handy to take really sharp corners just by slamming your transmission down to second gear. To be a real Jaguar master USE THE MANUAL SHIFT!



PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

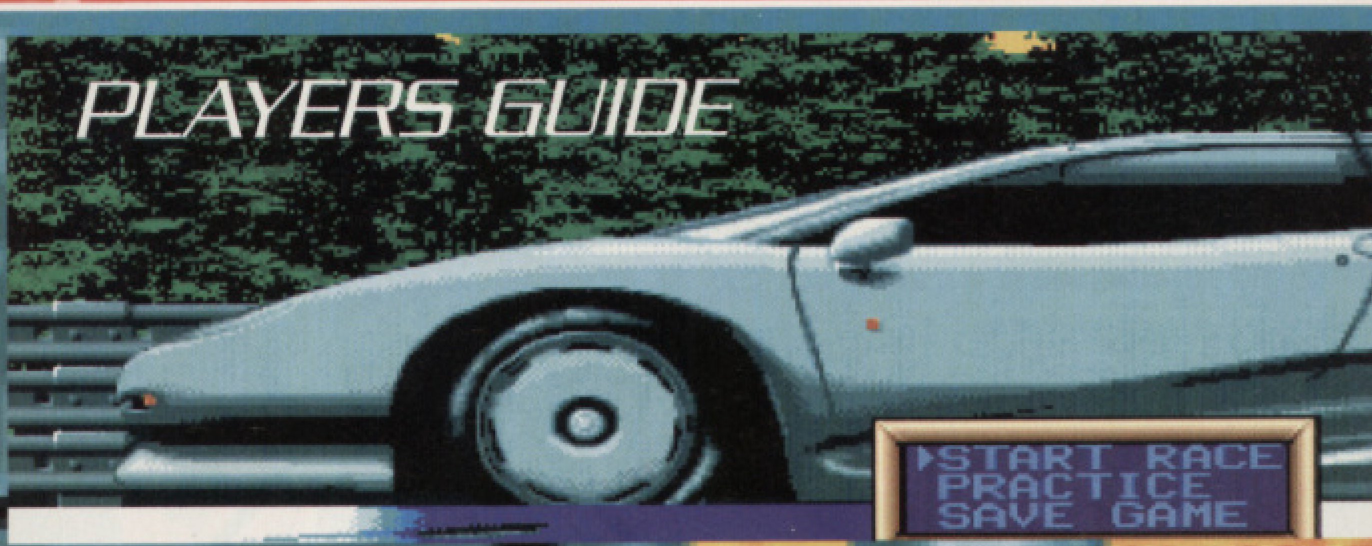
At the beginning of each race, you have the option to practise the circuit. We recommend that you take the opportunity to do so. We know that it's very tempting just to head for the qualifying circuit, but resist the temptation! Practising enables you to get to know the circuit (of course), but also comes in handy for judging when you need to refuel. With a bit of luck, you should be able to make all the major mistakes in your practice rounds and make qualifying and racing a breeze.

THE IMPORTANCE OF QUALIFYING

You've got to practise to make sure that you come in the top six. Should you lag behind, you're going to have extreme difficulty in working your way up to the top — in fact, it's nearly impossible! That's another good reason to make use of the Practise Round.







THE WORLD TOUR



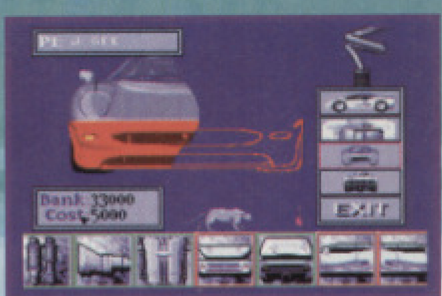
There are many differences between the World Tour and Grand Prix modes of Jaguar XJ220. The most basic is that you receive no real warning signs for the corners like you do on Grand Prix mode. This makes using the practise mode even more essential. The other notable difference is that it actually costs a lot of money to travel from one country to another. Although you can choose to take part in any race, heed your manager's advice. He always chooses the next race that's cheapest to enter. Always start your tour at England, since it costs next to nothing to enter the race.

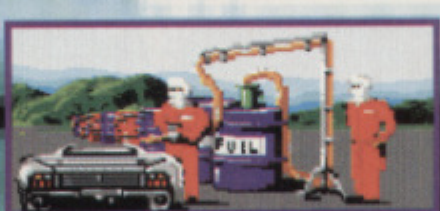
LAPPING IT UP

The game starts with a default three laps for you to complete each race. This generally means that you do not have to refuel in any race. If you want to have five, seven or nine laps, you're guaranteed to have to refuel. If you didn't do so well in the qualifying rounds, this gives you more time to catch up.















TWO PLAYER TACTICS

The good thing about Jaguar XJ220 is that the game sways the odds to give the losing player a chance to catch up with the winner. It does this by making the losing player's car go significantly faster! The only way for the winning player to keep his lead is to adopt one of two tactics. The first is to use the losing player's screen and make use your stay directly in front of him, thus cutting him up. The other method is to extend your lead by using the most direct driving line. That means taking all corners on the inside, basically. A very cunning tactic is to use the losing player's screen to line yourself up in front and then brake suddenly — your opponent should lose a lot more speed than you do.

X-MEN



2 PLAYERS

PRICE	£39.99
BY	BY: SEGA
RELEASE	MAY

OPTIONS

CONYROL: JOYPAD
GAME DIFFICULTY: ROCK
CONTINUES: NONE
SKILL LEVELS: THREE
RESPONSIVNESS: SKILL

1ST DAY SCORE

COMPLETE TWO LEVELS

ORIGIN

The Uncanny X-Men is the biggest-selling comic book of all-time.

HOW TO CONTROL

It's your common or garden platform control method with this game. Identical to every other Megadrive platformer, right down to pressing down and jump to fall through platforms! You get the idea.

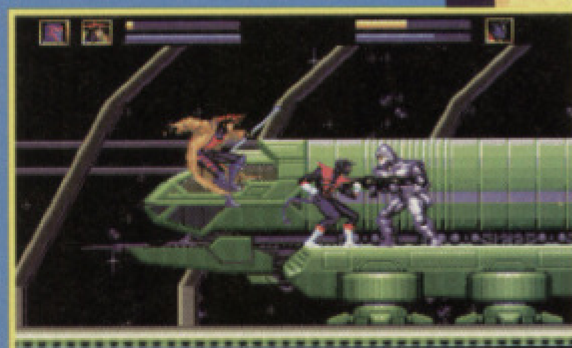
- **A** Special mutant power.
- **B** Attack.
- **C** Jump! Jump!
- **S** Starts and pauses the game

HOW TO

Guide your heroes to the end of each scrolling platform level, defeating the bosses in order to carry on.

It is said that mankind is in a permanent state of evolution. However, who would have thought that evolution would give human beings comic book superhuman powers? That's exactly what's happened in the X-Men, the top-selling comic of all-time. Now most people would happily use these powers to stop criminals and save the world (or whatever)... but 'most people' isn't Magneto and his bunch of crazed mutant followers. Luckily, the X-Men have always been at hand to heroically save the day from the forces of evil.

However, Magneto's striking back. What he's done is taken control of a sophisticated satellite. With this device in his power, Magneto's sent a powerful virus into the X-Men's Danger Room computers. This room is a holographic environment that allows the X-Men to hone their skills. However, now the threats have become real — and the X-Men are in mortal danger!

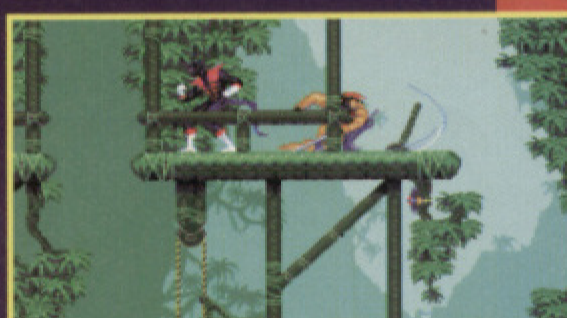


It's down to you yes, you (oh and a pal in two-player mode) to escape the peril of the Danger Room and give Magneto a pasting he's not likely to forget in a hurry.

ICON MOVE ANY MOUNTAIN



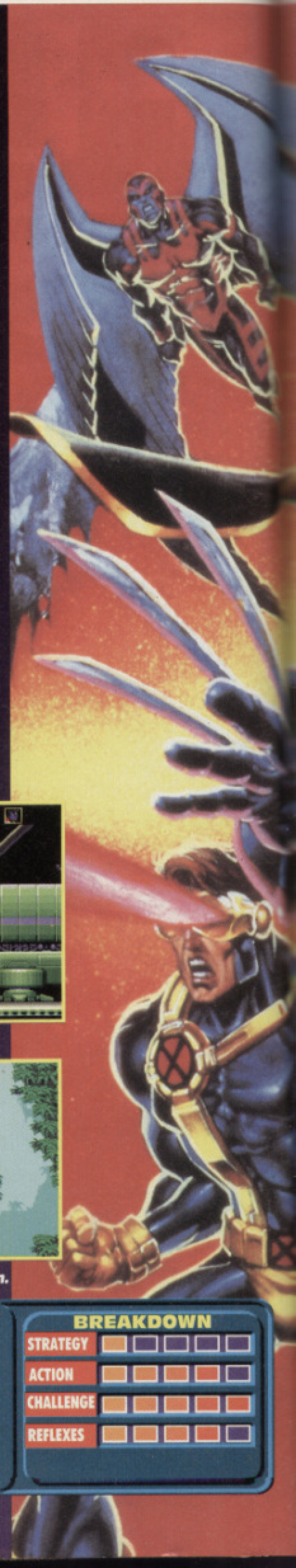
All manner of icons are carelessly left around the different platform levels. Keep an eye out yellow and blue X-icons. These replenish stamina and special powers respectively. Also available are Back-Up Team icons (enabling you to call upon the services of the other heroes more than once) as well as keys that open locked doors.



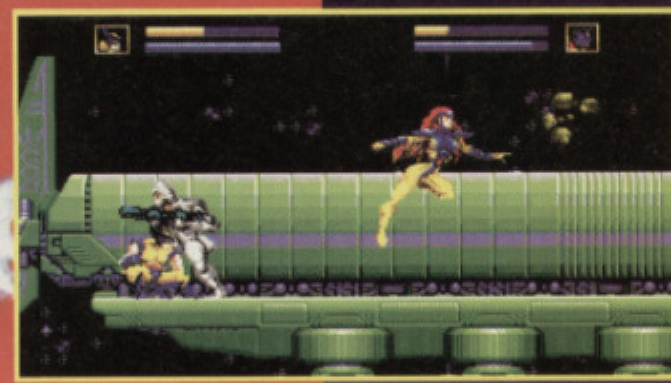
▲ *Ecologically sound goings on going down.*

LONG TERM REPORT					
HOUR	■	■	■	■	■
DAY	■	■	■	■	■
WEEK	■	■	■	■	□
MONTH	■	■	■	□	□
YEAR	□	□	□	□	□

BREAKDOWN					
STRATEGY	■	□	□	□	□
ACTION	■	■	■	■	□
CHALLENGE	■	■	■	■	■
REFLEXES	■	■	■	■	□







▲ *Participants limber up for the X rated video!*

X-MEN COMICS

The Uncanny X-Men was launched thirty years ago this year and sold so badly that it was almost shelved in the early seventies. The arrival of Wolverine, Colossus, Nightcrawler, Storm and company sensationalised the series' fortunes and became the world's best-selling comic. Numerous off-shoots were released, starting with The New Mutants (which lasted 100 issues before becoming X-Force). Other X-citing comics releases include Excalibur and X-Factor. Recently, the X-Men themselves were split into two distinct strike forces (that is, two comics) — Uncanny X-Men and, um, X-Men. Wolverine got his own comic series, along with Cable (mentor to X-Force). Oh, and let's not forget Classic X-Men, which covers the antics of the X-Men before they split into the two strike forces.

COMMENT



PAUL

As Rich states, this X-Men game is one of the toughest platformers around! There's a lot of depth to the gameplay too which adds even more to the compelling nature of it all. Even better is the neat presentation of it all. The first thing that strikes the player as the cart is powered up is the powerful, eerie music that backs the intro screen. This really helps to set the mood and it's great that similar creepy tunes feature in the game too. In fact I wish that more games took this kind of approach instead of the samey rock tunes we're often presented with. A good use of colour also helps to make the graphics of a high quality even though the animation is a bit limited at times when compared to the likes of Cyborg Justice. Including an element of exploration is a good idea and helps provide the game with an extra touch of class. All in all this is the best game based on a Marvel character that I've played since Megadrive Spider-Man — I wouldn't be surprised if it was by the same team. Even though the X-Men's special abilities are toned down a little I still think this a brilliant showcase for them and definitely worth buying.

GAMBIT

One of the newer X-additions, Gambit has the power to charge any item with kinetic energy. In the game this boils down to chucking explosive playing cards at people. Gambit has peak-human agility which enables him to perform massive somersaults.



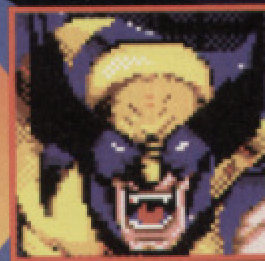


NIGHTCRAWLER

Born a freak of nature, Nightcrawler's life has been a struggle to be recognised for his deeds rather than his looks. He's the most athletic of the X-Men and can teleport about — walls are no obstacle for him. In the comics he could stick to walls and disappear in deep shadow, but there's none of that here. Also, he hasn't been in the X-Men comics for years now and instead heads up the England-based Excalibur team of super heroes.

CHARACTER PROFILE







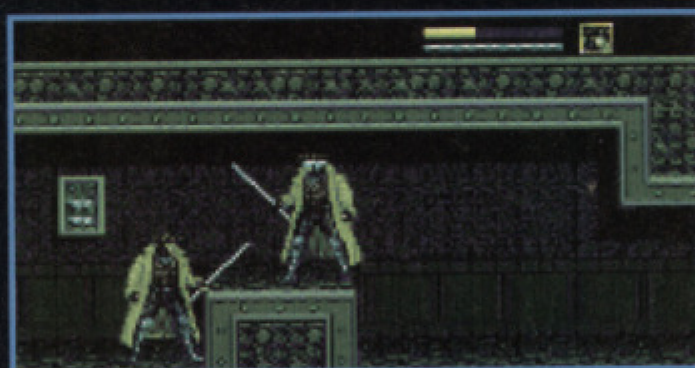
CYCLOPS

Unleashing powerful beams of optic power, Cyclops is a force to be reckoned with. In the game, Cyclops' power (which is said to be able to punch truck-size holes in inch-thick steel), is far less devastating, but he is a whole lot more athletic — ideal for the platform backgrounds.



WOLVERINE

Wolverine's mutant ability is his fast healing factor, which allows him to recover from wounds very quickly (although it doesn't seem to work in the game). Wolverine's bones are made of adamantium (the hardest metal in the world) and can cut through steel like a knife through butter.



▲ ***Listen Jack we might be twins but give me a break!***

TEAMWORK COUNTS

The X-Men comics are all about teamwork, something which this game attempts to emulate. A two-player mode has been included which allows two mutants to fight the menace of Magneto together. Should an X-Man be separated from his colleague, he can call upon Jean Grey (the X-Men's telepath) to teleport the lad furthest away from the end of the level to the fellow nearest. Funnily enough, using two players actually makes the game even harder than it is already!



BAR BAR BLACK SHEEP

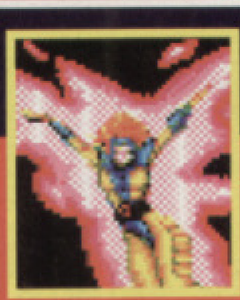
There are two distinct energy bars for each hero. The yellow bar indicates the level of stamina the player has remaining. The blue bar shows how much mutant power is remaining. Each time the player uses the hero's special power, this bar is gradually diminished.



▲ ***Ok buddy, if we win, I get to keep that dress agreed?***



ARCHANGEL



JEAN GREY



STORM



ICEMAN



ROGUE

X-MEN BACK-UP TEAM

By pausing the game and selecting another mutant, our heroes can call in a back-up to help him in his hour of need. The back-up team is as follows:

ROGUE
She has the ability to steal others' powers and memories, but in this game she just supplies a super-powered cuff to the jaw of any nasty X-enemies on screen.

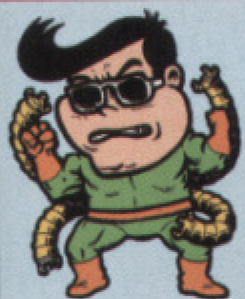
ARCHANGEL
His organic, razor-spitting steel wings are just the ticket for cutting up any devious boss that the main character has difficulty dealing with.

STORM
Storm's powers involve weather control, which allows her to create massive hurricanes that mercilessly beat the living daylights out of any enemies.

ICEMAN
As the name suggests, Iceman has power over snow and ice. In the comics, his is one of the most useful powers. In the game, he's reduced to creating ice bridges with which to cross massive chasms.

JEAN GREY
Jean Grey has exceptional control of her mutant mind-powers — in fact, she's one of the strongest telepaths on earth. However, she's having a bit of a holiday in this game, using her talents to warp people about occasionally as well as saving them from dropping off the bottom of the screen.

COMMENT



RICH

The X-Men is my favourite comic after Spider-Man, so I was really looking forward to this game. Comic fans are going to be disappointed — each hero's special power has either been completely watered-down (Cyclops, Wolverine) or the character has been endowed with phenomenal agility — I get the feeling this was based more on the forthcoming cartoon series than the comics. The game itself, however, is great. The backdrops and sprites are all superb and the gameplay is compelling because it's so damn tough! I've spent ages trying to crack the Excalibur level and I still can't do it! Aiieeee! The two-player mode is quite a laugh, but it actually makes the game tougher still because you can't progress at your own speed. Sega have got a real winner with X-Men — if you're after a tough platformer, check it out.



▲ *Hey you, the one with the big gun!*



▲ *Listen buddy, this tree is as much mine as yours!*



▲ *Wow! I bet your dog can say sausages as well!*



▲ *A super and heroic action that is both super and heroic!*

PRESENTATION — 78
▲ There are character stats of each X-Man, taken directly from the official Marvel Universe guide book.
▼ There are very few options to tweak.

GRAPHICS — 89
▲ The sprites and backgrounds are well-defined and faithful to the comic strip. There's decent levels of animation and plenty of variety.

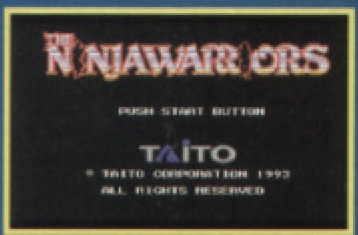
SOUND — 84
▲ There's a good deal of atmospheric music which helps enhance the game no end.
▼ The sound effects are a tad lacking at times.

PLAYABILITY — 89
▲ X-Men is very easy to get into and extremely addictive. The two-player mode adds a new dimension to the game.

LASTABILITY — 87
▲ There are only six levels in total, but things get EXTREMELY tough on level three — and that's only in AMATEUR mode! The two-player mode adds to the longevity of the game.

OVERALL — 88
Another fine Marvel comic makes it to the Megadrive and it's pretty good! X-Men is tough, playable and great with two players! Well worth adding to your collection.

NINJA WA



1-2 PLAYERS

PRICE	IMPORT
BY	TAITO
RELEASE	OUT NOW

OPTIONS

CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES: 3
SKILL LEVELS: 4
RESPONSIVENESS: OKAY
GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM

1ST DAY SCORE

100,000

ORIGIN

Ninja Warriors is a straight conversion of the ageing Taito coin-op released in the late eighties.

HOW TO CONTROL

Basically, the control pad works much the same way as normal. Left and right mnove you in those specific directions. Up causes you to jump and down makes you crouch. Exciting eh?

- **A** Slash (!)/defend
- **B** Throw shuriken
- **C** Nothing
- **S** Starts and pauses the game.

HOW TO PLAY

Guide your ninja through the scrolling levels killing everything in your path.

Abraham Lincoln, George Washington, Ronald Reagan and of course, Bill Clinton. America's presidents have always been known for their er, honesty and integrity... um, until the evil Banglar came along!

Once he was voted into office, he took it upon himself to become president of the world! He started at home, taking control of the underworld. He used drug and prostitution money to firmly entrench himself in the presidency of America, disbanding congress and killing any one who stood up against him. Now, with the states in his control, it's only a matter of time before he attempts to take over the entire world!

It's down to one lone inventor to save the day. Using his resistance pals to supply him with the necessary equipment, he devises and creates two robots with superhuman strength and the mystical might of the ninja! However, he needs a skilled human to take control of his creations. That's where you (and of the course, your ubiquitous pal in two-player mode) come in.

You've got to use your joypad abilities to guide the ninja through the scrolling levels that make up the president's defences, and then murder him! Simple eh? Or is it?



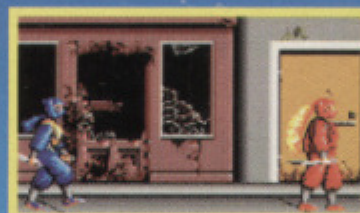


DEATH STAR ACTION

Ninjas are well known for their skuriken death star-related tomfoolery. Therefore, it should come as no surprise that our robo-ninja pals have similar skills. They start the game with 30 of these weapons and are able to magically conjure up five more after about half a minute should they run out. Shurikens are best used as range weapons, with the ninja blade being used to kill close-up meanies. Two death stars are required to kill off your average foot soldier.

TWO CAN PLAY AT THIS GAME

Ninja Warriors is virtually identical in terms of gameplay to the arcade original, meaning that two players can take to the console for simultaneous fun and frolics... sort of. The gameplay actually becomes even more boring since you only have to deal with half the enemies and there's no interaction between the players whatsoever. Doh!

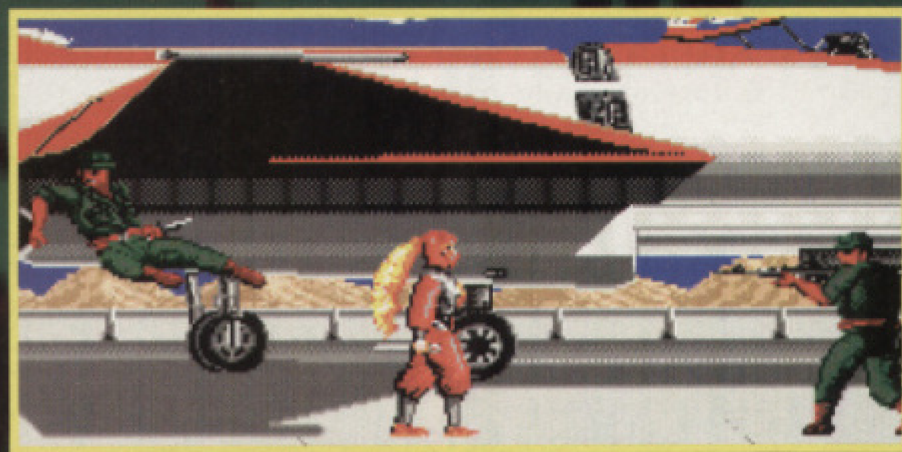


Well, a big thanks go to Osmond Browne, for making us caption a picture as completely mind-numbingly tedious as this one. What a guy! What a picture! Amazing.

MILLIONS OF MEANIES

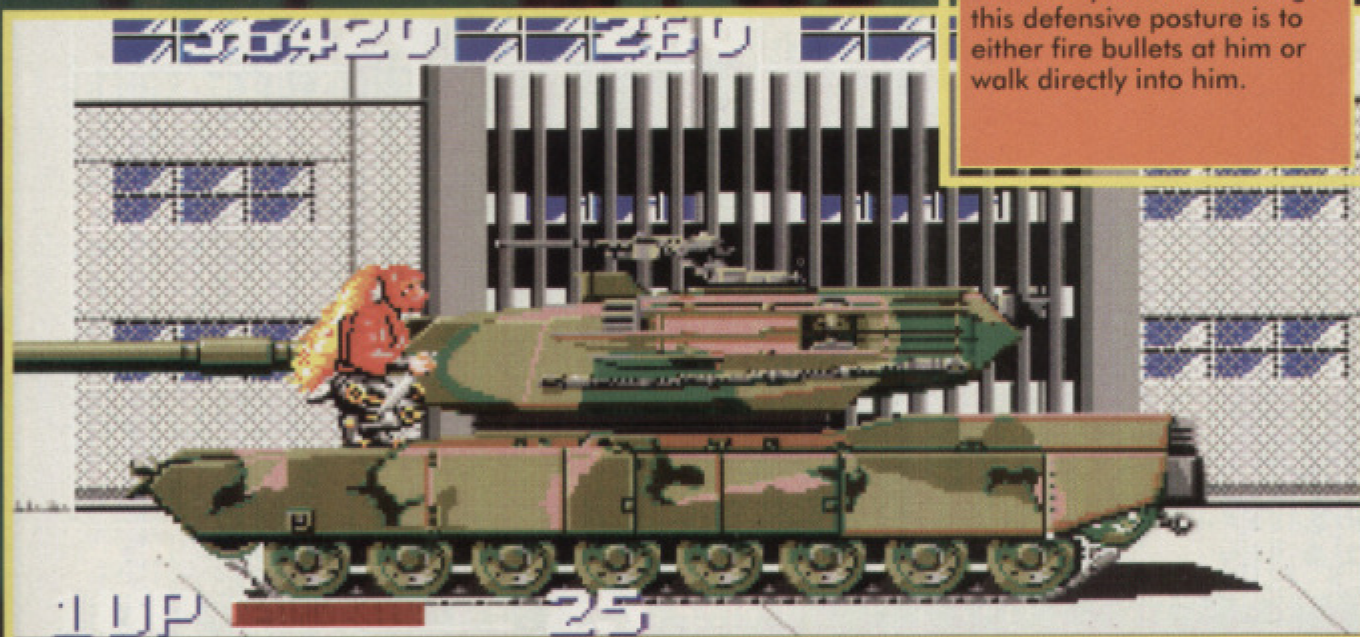
The evil president obviously has access to a brilliant cloning machine that enables him to clone off several thousand identical soldiers and dogs. As you may have gathered, what this generally boils down to is a severe lack of variety in the game's line-up of enemy sprites. However, later levels of the game do introduce several new types of meanie to complement the cloned hordes, including robots and fire-breathing circus refugees.

RRIORS



"Intriguing... my head's about to be blown off..."





BEST DEFENCE

Hold down the slash button and your ninja enters defence mode. Somehow, crossing his ninja blades manages to protect him from just about any sort of damage that the legions of enemy sprites intend to do unto him. The only way for the enemy to break through this defensive posture is to either fire bullets at him or walk directly into him.

COMMENT



RICH

I've just been to the ECTS show where I saw Mega-CD games like Thunderhawk that really show that the Mega-CD has a shining future. And then I return to the office, where I discover Ninja Warriors — a game that throws the Mega-CD back into the dark ages! Apart from the CD sound (which is actually rather cacky), there's nothing at all to differentiate this game from a sad, shambling, sub-standard Megadrive game. The sprites lack decent animation and definition — I've seen better on the Master System! The backdrops are worse still, far worse than the average 8-bit game. But it's the shambling gameplay that hammers home the final nail in the misshapen, ramshackle coffin that is Ninja Warriors. Not for a long time have I played a game so mind-numbingly tedious as this. What made it worse was that I had to keep playing this game enough to do a fair review (even while the courier arrived downstairs with the Jungle Strike review cart!). Suffice to say, it was a deeply monotonous experience from which I am only just starting to recover. What can I say? Keep away from Ninja Warriors — the really good Mega-CD stuff is just around the corner so stay away from this utter cow pat of a disc.



Once again, it's excitement overload as the red ninja kills off a blue soldier, even whilst his fetching red pyjamas suddenly catch fire for no reason at all.

THANKS TO...

A big "ta!" to Advance Console Entertainment of London for loaning us their copy of Ninja Warriors. For more information, give them a call on 071 439 1185.

"So... play games will you?"



COMMENT

ANDY

I'm behind Rich one hundred per cent on this — Ninja Warriors is the sorriest excuse we've had for a game since the awful Afterburner III. The thing is, it's not really the fault of the programmers. Obviously, they were ordered to faithfully convert Ninja Warriors to the Mega-CD and this they have done. The thing is, the original coin-op was mind-numbingly tedious with very little in the way of thrills or reaction testing. The question on my mind is: why bother converting this lacking coin-op? It wasn't a major hit in the arcades and the concept is years old. We should be seeing all-new games on the Mega-CD, games that really put the innovative hardware to good use. Ninja Warriors is not one of the games. You'd have to be a drooling, gibbering fool to invest your hard earned pounds into this sorry game.

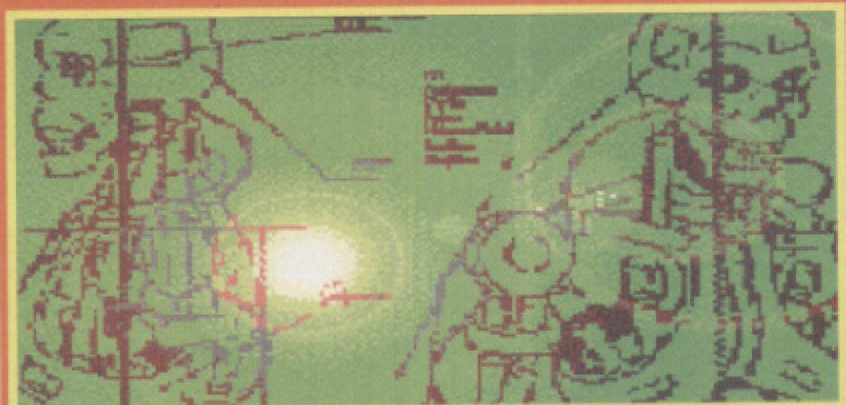
LONG TERM REPORT	
HOUR	■■□□□
DAY	■□□□□
WEEK	□□□□□
MONTH	□□□□□
YEAR	□□□□□

BREAKDOWN	
STRATEGY	□□□□□
ACTION	■□□□□
CHALLENGE	■■■□□
REFLEXES	■■□□□

STRIP TEASE

The robo-ninjas start the game disguised as the real masters of ninjitsu, with only their bizarre marching animation giving away their robotic origins. However, as the game progresses, the ninjas suffer battle damage that shreds sections of their clothing and exposes their metallic limbs.









▲ *A montage of sadness from the hall of shame's newest member — Taito's cacky Ninja Warriors.*

POP SPECTACULAR

On the title screen there's a special ZUNTATA option which reveals more about the background of the game. However, the intro soon changes into a sad slide show "pop video". In this audio-visual feast, the player is treated to strobing slides of the music's composers during one of their "gigs" (at least that's who we think they are). The music you can swing your pants to is the game's main theme! Forget MTV Unplugged, you've got a cheesy "live" band on CD with Ninja Warriors!



PRESENTATION

77

▲ There's an exceptionally amusing ZUNTATA mode which details the background behind the game. There are plenty of options as well.

▼ The actual in-game presentation is of 8-bit standard.

GRAPHICS

43

▼ Urghhhh! Ninja Warriors features graphics that would be more suited to a Master System game than Sega's top of the range CD technology. The sprites are sad and monotonous and the backdrops are horrendous.

SOUND

50

▲ The music consists of one of those tunes that you don't especially like, but doesn't get on your nerves in a hurry.

▼ The sound effects are extremely samey.

PLAYABILITY

38

▼ Although easy enough to get into, it only takes a few moments before you realise that the sad, monotonous gameplay isn't likely to change much the further you get into the game.

LASTABILITY

20

▼ The game just grows too boring too quickly. Usually a two-player mode enhances a game's longevity. The opposite is true here.

OVERALL

30

Ninja Warriors takes us back to the days long ago when all Mega-CD titles were complete cack, with an "intriguing" intro taking up the CD space. A waste of money, basically.


GET YOUR HEAD INTO...
KRUSTY'S SUPER FUN HOUSE
(BEN THE BOFFIN HAS!)
NOW AVAILABLE ON:
SEGA
Master System II
SEGA
GAME GEAR
SUPER NINTENDO
GAME BOY
Nintendo
SEGA
MEGA DRIVE
Krusty the Clown's in a spot of bother.
His Super Fun House has been overrun by rasca
rats and it's your job to help him make the pesk
varmints vanish.
"This game is a winner - 87%" - CVG
But before you can say 'rats' to the
rampaging rodents, you've got to collect bricks
blocks and blowers plus a whole host of other
devious devices that will help get the rats to the
coolest traps you've ever seen.
"Well weird ... and addictive too - 80%" - Total
Along the way you'll find plenty of
confusing secret passages and doors as well
as Krusty's sworn enemies – the Pink Flying Pig
Venom Vipers, Laser Aliens and Giant Goofy Bird
But don't worry, your ready supply of custard pie
will soon sort them out.
"A truly essential purchase - 90%" - Mean Machine
So if you think you're ready to get
your head into Krusty's Super Fun House –
get rat trapping now!
Ben the Boffin can be seen on Channel 4's
The Big Breakfast on Thursdays.
Coming soon from Acclaim – more of your
favourite Simpsons characters in Bart vs The
World, Itchy and Scratchy, Bartman meets
Radioactive Man and Bart's Nightmare.
FLYING EDGE
Acclaim™
The Simpsons™ and © 1993 Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation
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Flying Edge is a trademark of Acclaim Entertainment, Inc.
© 1993 Acclaim Entertainment, Inc.
MATT GROENING



1-8 PLAYERS

PRICE	39.99
BY	ACCOLADE
RELEASE	TBA

OPTIONS

CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES: N/A
SKILL LEVELS: 3
RESPONSIVENESS:AVERAGE
GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM

1ST DAY SCORE

456785789

ORIGIN

LATEST IN AN EVER GROWING LINE OF SPORTS SIMULATION GAMES A LA OLYMPIC GOLD, WINTER CHALLENGE ETC.

HOW TO CONTROL

The skillful combination of button pressing and joystick waggling is the sure-fire key to success in this game. Each event requiring a different technique.

A Rarely used.

B Increase speed.

C Action.

S Starts and pauses the game.

HOW TO PLAY

Take part in 8 events. Score in the top three positions for a medal. Gain points for a higher league position.

Every four years, the countries of the world come together to celebrate the Games of the Modern Olympiad, an idea of Pierre de Coubertin, a mad Frenchman from the last century. Did I say mad? You might disagree, thinking that the person responsible for all those dollars made out of Coca Cola and Reebok and Seiko watches was a genius. But when old Pierre organised the first modern games, he had people doing the sack race and was handing out gold medals for the three-legged event.

Of course, he was promptly shot for crimes against sport, and the Games became a favourite of the Brits (principally because we are better at running than we are at tennis or ice-skating). Hoping to tap into this, Accolade have made Summer Challenge, a veritable 'Dairy Box' of diverse events, for an international tournament. Although this is nothing to do with the Olympics, you understand, since no-one was prepared to cough up the spondoolicks just for that funny little Barcelona squiggle. But games it is, nonetheless.

THE EVENTS

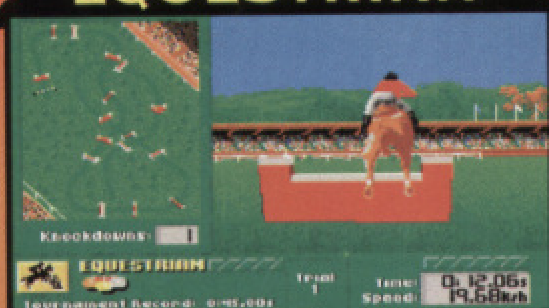
The eight events that comprise Summer Challenge cover a wide area of Olympic disciplines. Here is a brief description of each:



Yes kids, rythmn, as in many other things in life, is the key to success in this exhausting event.

SUMMER CHALLENGE

EQUESTRIAN



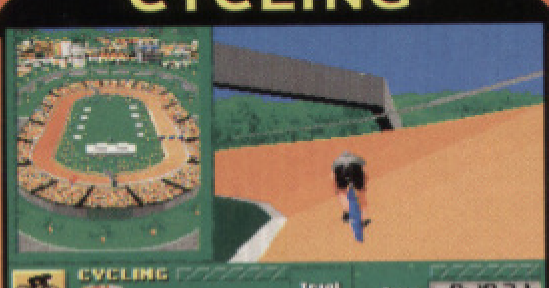
The show jumpers compete over a twisting course of composite jumps. To make each jump you must stay in the tramlines, and get your speed just right. Knocking fences causes time penalties, but falls and refusals mean disqualifications.

KAYAKING



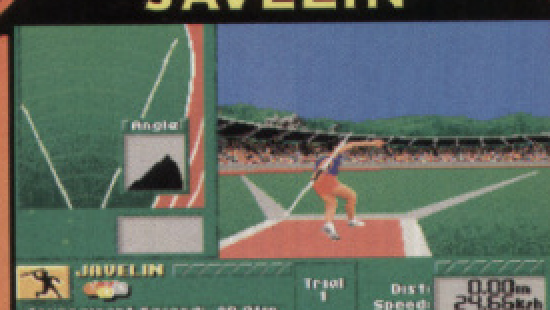
The man-made canoe course is a 3D slalom event against the clock. Race down the course steering between the gates, using the joypad to dip your paddles. Missing gates, or clipping poles means a hefty time penalty being added at the end.

CYCLING



More 3D antics at the velodrome. This is a simple button pusher, which maintains your speed. Taking the banks at a low-level is the way to shave seconds off your time. Two complete laps of the circuit are required to finish this event.

JAVELIN



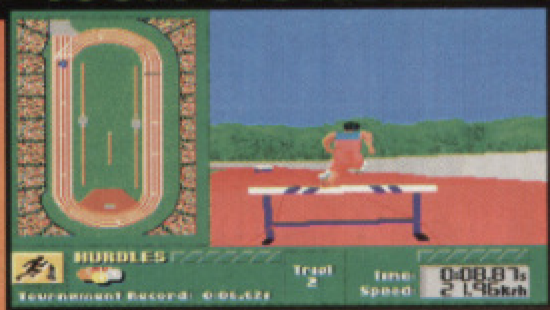
The favourite of hefty women with armpit hair, your javelin throw is set in a 3D stadium. Gather speed on a short run up, then hold the button to increase the angle of throw. Get it right and you could get 90m, but keep behind the white line.

ARCHERY



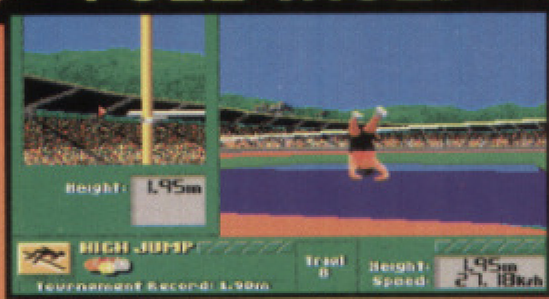
A more reflective event, relying on your skills of timing. You have 12 arrows to fire in batches of three. After you load an arrows you must direct the cross-hair, accounting for the slight movements of your body. The archer here seems to have been drinking too much with his twitching! Scores between one and ten are totted up for the event total.

400M HURDLES



The one track event is viewed from a position behind the hurdler, as he attempts a hazardous circuit of the stadium. Completing the course is a mixture of hard button pressing and precision timing, as it's all too easy to crash a hurdle and rule your self out of the race.

POLE VAULT



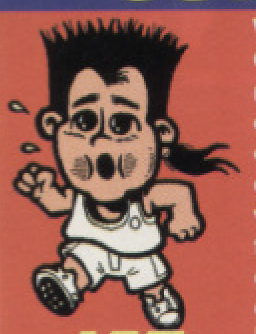
Traditionally a taxing and daring event, this version relies on speed and timing. Get a good run up, then press the button for each of the three stages — the plant, the vault and the release as you pass over the bar. You have three attempts at each height, and you only need one clearance to proceed.

HIGH JUMP



An event revolutionised by Fosbury in the Sixties. It's his flop method you use to clear heights of over two metres. Take your curving run up from an angle to the bar, then launch yourself with the button. A second press tucks your legs up and straightens your back, so you sail over (in theory).

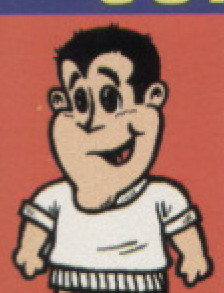
COMMENT



JAZ

What a mixed bag. Summer Challenge features some nice gameplay ideas, but also some crap ones. Some of the events like javelin and archery are really fun, while others like the equestrian and hurdles are plain dull. The graphics, sound and even the presentation like the opening and closing sequences are all patchy too. It's like the programmers tried to cram in too much and had to make compromises everywhere, rather than dropping two or three events and making what was left really high quality. It's certainly better than Olympic Gold, but then that's not saying much.

COMMENT



GUS

(Deep sigh). Well, I appreciate everything Accolade tried to do with this, but it's nowhere near the podium. They should at least receive commendation for attempting to use polygon graphics, and the events that use them most — Equestrian and hurdles, are the best to play. Other bright spots include the Javelin and Archery, which are both fun enough. Otherwise, the jerkiness of the graphic update, or the lack of thought in the gameplay itself, make this a chore to play. The crappy ceremonies show how shabby the presentation is in places, which ruins the crucial sense of atmosphere that a sports events game needs. Sadly Summer Challenge is not a medal prospect.

LONG TERM REPORT

HOUR	■■■■■
DAY	■■■■□
WEEK	■■■□□
MONTH	■□□□□
YEAR	■□□□□

BREAKDOWN

STRATEGY	■■□□□
ACTION	■■■□□
CHALLENGE	■■■□□
REFLEXES	■■■□□

PRESENTATION

83

▲The multi-player options and the training function are well done, and essential to a game of this sort.
▼The medal ceremony, and the opening and closing are pretty dire.

GRAPHICS

74

▲Interesting use of polygons give an original perspective. Some of the animation is quite impressive.
▼There are problems with the graphics update — it's slow and jerky.

SOUND

53

▼This is one area where Summer Challenge is very weak. The music is execrable and the composer should be executed forthwith. The effects don't redeem it.

PLAYABILITY

69

▲Having eight events seems a lot and some time is spent dabbling amongst them, picking your favourites.
▼Some of the events are too simplistic, whereas others are nearly impossible, so there's no balance.

LASTABILITY

63

▲Summer Challenge is the game to drag out at group occasions in the future, because of the multi-player option.
▼But you might soon find yourself short of companions when you turn it on...

OVERALL

67

A brave attempt at a new kind of sports game, but the Megadrive isn't ready for some of its ideas. Poor graphics and sound let it down the most.

SEGA

1 PLAYERS

PRICE £39.99

BY VIRGIN

RELEASE JUNE

OPTIONS

CONTROL: JOYPAD
CONTINUES: 1-6
SKILL LEVELS: 2
RESPONSIVENESS: EXCELLENT
GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM

1ST DAY SCORE

103,000

ORIGIN

Cool Spot is an original platform game idea, but the character moonlights as chief ad mascot of the 7-up drinks company in America.

HOW TO CONTROL

An apropriate press on the joypad directs Spot in that direction. Similarly Spot fires his weapon depending on the direction selected on the joypad.

- **A** NO FUNCTION
- **B** SHOOT
- **C** JUMP
- **S** PAUSE

HOW TO PLAY

Standard platform action: collect enough spots to release Cool's friend from a cage on each of 11 levels.

Spots live an unusual existence. For many weeks none are visible, then the day before a party or job interview, a tribe wend there way across your face. The spot is rather fussy about where he makes his home. Oh no, not some discreet place on the back of the neck — that's too good for him. He chooses to pitch his tent right between the eyes, on the bridge of your nose, where he grows and blossoms to a fulsome yellowness.

With all this in mind, I could sympathise with Wild wicked Willy Will, and his desire to capture a crop of zits. But todays's society seems to have abandoned custodial punishment, even for such crimes of gross disfigurement. And so, you must aid Cool Spot in his quest to free his pustulous mates, as they wait trapped on the beach, the bath and the nursery. But despite having a plot that would have the beauty brigade up in arms, it's all good dirty fun!

COOL





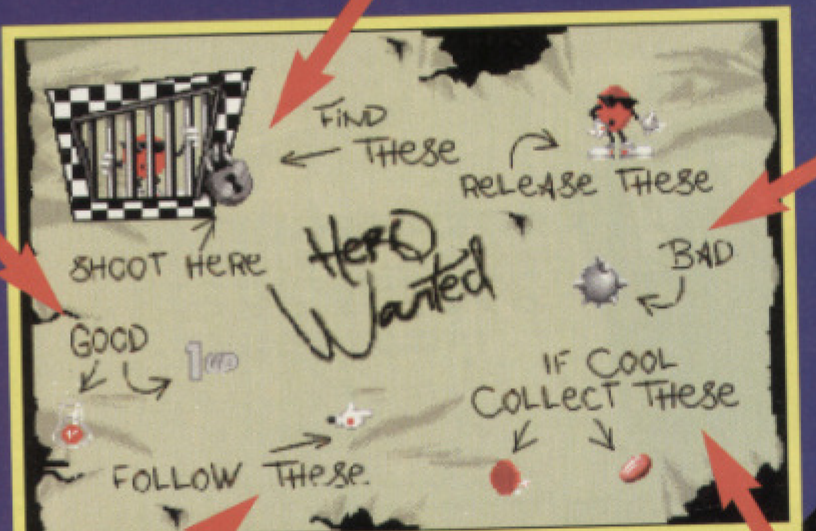
▲Hyuk Hyuk! I can see the colour of your underpants Spot.

SPOT ON

Spot's instructions are pretty simple, and are laid out in a diagram screen before the game begins:

'FIND THESE, SHOOT HERE'

The spots are held in cages at the level's end, usually a far trek up and right. Once you get there shoot the lock on the cage door to release said spot.



'GOOD'

There are a few welcome pick-ups in the shape of 7-Up bottles. This revives the deflating Spot at the top of the screen, which represents your energy level. Sometimes shooting a baddie reveals a bottle. On rare occasions you find a 1-up.

BAD

Inevitably, there's plenty of bad vibes to lower Spot's cool rating. Mines are only one source of trouble. Add crabs, snails, maggots, Robby Robots, bandits...

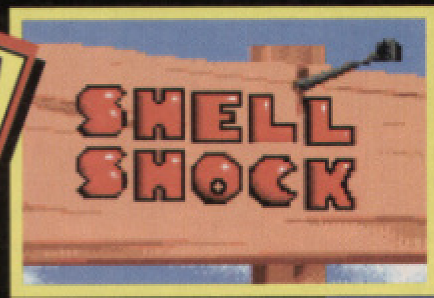
'FOLLOW THESE'

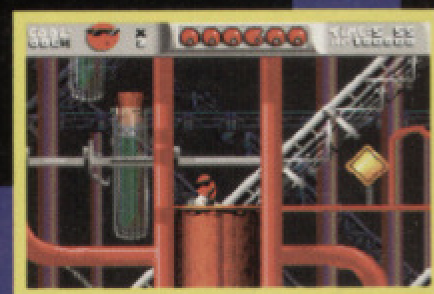
Watch for Cool Spots turning into pointing hands, which direct you to the cage. On later levels the position of the trapped spot may not be so easy to divine.

'COLLECT THESE'

Collecting spots is a vital task. You may only release a captive after getting 60 of these. Spots that sparkle or have Virgin symbols are worth more than a single spot. Get over 85% cool and you enter a bonus round.







L SPOT

GOT THE BOTTLE

The bonus round is set inside a bottle of pop. It's a basic collect 'em fest, with just one minute to gather as many spots as possible. The real prizes are at the top of the screen, which is reached by using the gas bubbles as steps, though these pop as soon as they're stepped upon. Collect the letters of the word 'Virgin' and you have a continue in the bank.



▲ *Hey! Aren't they those red smarties that are supposed to be bad for you?*

ACNE MARSHES

Spot's world is a curious place of mismatch and implausibility. Take a peek at just four of its areas:

LIFE'S A BEACH

A nasty dose of crabs awaits Spot as he traverses the dunes. The biggest obstacle he faces is a metal deck-chair. Hermit crabs display their underwear if prised out of their pointy shells! The level end lies high up in a cloud of helium balloons.





▲ *Aw, I don't want to be in the middle any more.*

COMMENT



GUS

Absolutely cracking! Just as I was fed up with platform games, Spot comes along to remind how good they can be. Remarks about Mick and Mack have been made, and superficially the games are the same. They certainly have the same amount of polish and excellent presentation. But Cool Spot is much more fun to play than Global Gladiators. Each level is the right mix of frustration and reward, and the incentive of the bonus game leads you to search out every spot. The bonus round itself is an excellent points dash, that dangles that prospect of 100% just out of your reach. As you can see yourself, the graphics are brilliant, even by the ever-increasing standards of Megadrive games. The sound is also ace, for both music and FX. But it's not just the facade that makes this the megagame it is: Cool Spot has that rare feel about it, that gives you such a hit when you pick up the joypad. It's the control, it's the animation, it's the brilliant character. I can assure you of eleven levels of great fun.

PIER PRESSURE

Where the rich have their yachts docked, Spot gets to wander through the mouldy timbers of jettys, climbing mooring ropes and avoiding maggots. Further danger is posed by the jumping King Clams spitting pearls of wisdom. Spookiest of all are the headless fishmen, who seem to grow out the wood!



◀ *You want to be careful, Spot. You could get a nasty bit of chafing on those ropes!*

LONG TERM REPORT	
HOUR	■■■■□
DAY	■■■■□
WEEK	■■■◧□
MONTH	■■□□□
YEAR	■□□□□

BREAKDOWN	
STRATEGY	■□□□□
ACTION	■■□□□
CHALLENGE	■■□□□
REFLEXES	■■□□□

COMMENT



RICH

Basically, this is what Global Gladiators should have been! Cool Spot impresses immediately with its cartoon-quality graphics — they are truly astounding. The animation on Spot himself is awesome and the definition on the backdrops makes many Super NES game pale by comparison. The game itself is fast, fun and very tough. I did complete it after a few days' play, but it was very difficult indeed (and I am a bit of a whizz at these sort of games). Some of the levels, like the train stage and the bath are so fiendishly designed you end up incredibly frustrated — but you simply MUST keep playing! The bonus round is excellent too. Bouncing around the inside of a pop bottle on thr bubbles is a marvellous idea and you're constantly trying to better your previous score and locate the extra continue. Buy Cool Spot — it stands head and shoulders over the competition.

ORDER OF THE BATH



A journey across the tub is required, and a perilous voyage it is. Hitting the water is doom, and the frogs are intent on pushing you there. Above the bath is a wave of barrage balloons, flying saucers and space rockets. Why they are there is a mystery, but they sure do provide a slippery and frustrating pontoon to the cage.





▲ *Er, froggy mate. I don't quite know how to tell you this...*

THE LOCOMOTION



▼ ***O great Spotness. I bow in your presence my liege.***

Spot takes a ride on a runaway train in his quest to save spots. This express belongs to the banditos, as carriage after carriage holds some gun-toting gringos. As the background flies by, Spot encounters inflatable animals in gumboots, as the level takes on a psychedelic glaze.







SHAFTED

Spot's crusade takes him into a sinister jumble of chutes and air-shafts. It's hard to find a flat piece of ground, as the steep chutes guide him down set paths. The air shafts blow Spot back up, and many of the cool spots are hidden in the tubes. There are no baddies, so this is a level mainly against the clock and the weird control.

PRESENTATION — 89

▲ There's a choice of difficulty levels, an ace sound test, and a rather cool customisation of the Sega logo.
▼ There should have been a two-player option for alternate turns.

GRAPHICS — 94

▲ Super smooth animation on Spot, for all his many movements, The backgrounds are just brilliant. This is one of the best looking Megadrive games ever.

SOUND — 90

▲ Some of the music leaves you wondering how bongo drums and harmonicas could possibly be fitted into the Megadrive!.
▼ The countdown bleep is a bit sad.

PLAYABILITY — 92

▲ Cool Spot grips you like a vice the first time you pick it u. Take a thermos and a week's supplies before you start.
▼ Some of the levels are very frustrating.

LASTABILITY — 88

▲ Eleven top levels , and some are very challenging. It's also fun to come back to.
▼ A tad too many extra lives and energy left around, methinks.

OVERALL — 90

Spot has earned the right to label himself cool. Platform gamers will go ape. This has to be one of the best Megadrive games of the year.



STEEL TALONS
Steel Talons is a high-tech combat flight simulator with 360° polygon graphics giving total control over the most advanced attack helicopter currently being used by the United States Army. So, strap on your flight harness and prepare for the ride of your life!
Select Game
COMBAT MISSIONS
HEAD TO HEAD
TRAINING
AIR DATA INFO.
• 2 PLAYER
• 12 MISSIONS
• 3 TYPES OF PLAY
• 3 LEVELS OF DIFFICULTY
• STATE OF THE ART WEAPONRY, INCLUDING A 30MM CHAIN CANNON
• BORON CARBIDE ARMOUR
• VTV LOCKING SYSTEM
DOMARK
TENGEN VIDEO GAMES
SEGA MEGA DRIVE
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STREETS OF RAGE



1 PLAYERS

PRICE	TBA
BY	SEGA
RELEASE	MAY

OPTIONS

CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES: 3
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: GOOD
GAME DIFFICULTY: EASY

1ST DAY SCORE

End of Level Six

ORIGIN

Streets of Rage is a conversion of the top-selling and indeed, topper, Megadrive game.

HOW TO CONTROL

Jump and punch. Jump and punch using the required combination of button presses and joystick manipulation like the wind, old woman!

1 Attacks and picks up

2 Jump

HOW TO PLAY

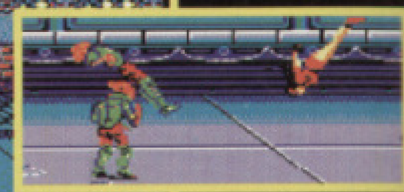
Guide one of the three characters through the city streets and knock the seven shades out of anything that moves.

A sleepy city, where the most excitement of the week used to be the WI jumble sale and the only hint of scandal ever was the local vicar being found in bed with the Mayor, has been turned upside down by a vicious crime syndicate hell-bent on bringing the city down through violence, crime, terror and despair. Even the boys in blue are bent (as in corrupt) and it seems like old-fashioned values and morals are lost for good — oh woe and woe again.

Fortunately, three ex-cops, fed up with all that nasty dog cack left lying on the pavement because the street cleaners have all been wasted, have decided to take the law into their own hands, triple-handedly smash the wicked crime ring, restore peace to the land and end the reign of violence by knocking the living daylights out of anything that moves. Whoopee doo!

As the formidable Blaze, Adam or Axel, use your individual fighting skills and whatever instruments — blunt or otherwise — carelessly left around, to waste the evil crime ring over eight treacherous levels, restore peace and harmony to the world and defend street-sweepers everywhere.





'Eek! Who moved the pool of water?!'

COMMENT



LUCY

This version of Streets of Rage is a classic case of too little too late. The Megadrive version of the game was out ages ago and for its time wasn't bad at all — poor old Master System owners have had to wait nearly two years and are rewarded with what is comparatively a pile of old tosh. There's nothing new in here at all, there's little variation in any aspect of the game and it's dullsville galore as you mooch along bashing baddies in the same old way — whichever character you play. And okay, Master Systems aren't the most sophisticated consoles in the world but surely they can handle more than three sprites on the screen at the same time? In retrospect, this is probably why there's no two-player mode, with simultaneous play that would reduce your baddie encounters to a grand total of one per screen – phew! It's fairly obvious that Sega have launched this on the back of the recently launched Streets of Rage II on the Megadrive but there's just no comparison. Unless you're a complete beat 'em up freak I'd give this one a very wide berth.



Have at you, oh small white pixel.

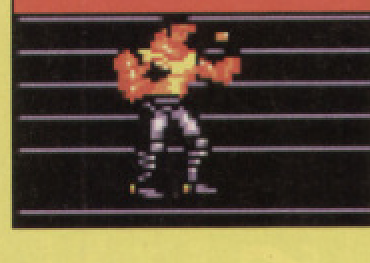
ATTACK KNACK





ADAM

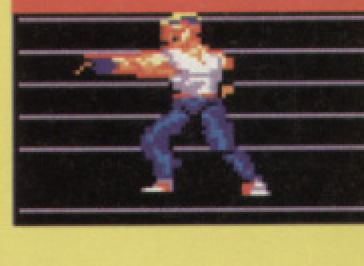
Choose from one of three characters — Adam, with his supreme boxing skills is ace at jumping and has a





AXEL

strong attacking force but his speed is slow; Axel the martial arts expert has strong attacks but a low



TASTY TECHNIQUES

By cunning approaches and clever button manipulation most enemies can be effortlessly overcome. If you approach from the front, the enemy's grabbable. When approaching from the back, grab their waists and either flip them over by pressing B or backdrop them with A. If you're grabbed by the waist press B for a double kick or if you're thrown, press the D-pad up and B to land on your feet.



BRUISING BOSSES

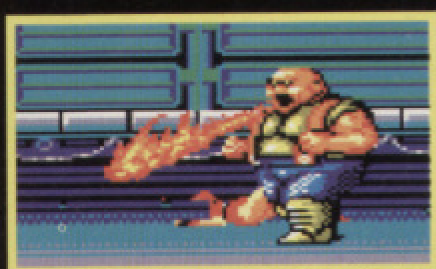


▲'Aiee! Not again!!'

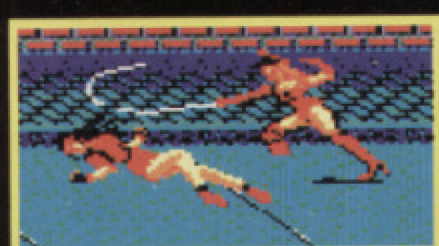
The bosses are, on the whole, something on the sad side even though they come in all shapes and sizes and with a variety of weapons. There's a big bruiser who rushes you, knocking you to the floor if you're not too quick on your feet, another who launches boomerangs at you, one who breathes fire, one who bounces you from one side of the screen to the other or else there's double trouble in the shape of the deadly martial arts twins. But since you can whoop their butts fairly successfully by simply standing on the edge of the screen and battering hell out of them while they're out of the picture it all seems a bit futile after a while.



▲'Hello, I've got awfully bad breath I'm afraid'



▲'Lorraine, Lorraine, Lorraine, (© Bad Manners)



◀ In the midst of a food fight Blaze is subjected to a milky soaking.



BLAZE

jump or Blaze, the master of Judo who's skilled at jumping but sad on the attack power front.



COMMENT



ROB

It's about time the Master System was treated to some rather groovy beat 'em up action and what game could be better than Streets of Rage? But before you mug your piggy bank, I've got some bad news. This may well be a conversion of a classic, but somewhere along the line a pretty destructive spanner found its way into the works. You see, this really isn't very good. On the surface it looks like nothing has been taken out of the original Megadrive version and this is largely true, the characters, special moves, villains, backdrops and bosses are all familiar. What is new to this version is the shabby and slow nature of the action making this about as thrilling as a day out to a domestic utensils museum... with your chemistry teacher. The unresponsive nature of the joypad means that throwing punches has an air of languid indifference, and special moves are never easy to pull off because of the sluggish nature of the controls. Unfortunately the animation isn't much better, although the characters all possess exemplary moonwalking skills! The game also suffers from some heavy sprite flicker especially when characters move in on each other. From one perspective, Streets of Rage isn't bad enough to be a disaster, but from another it is, especially when you consider the success of its Megadrive counterpart which has itself been superseded by an even more impressive version.

LONG TERM REPORT

- HOUR
- DAY
- WEEK
- MONTH
- YEAR

BREAKDOWN

- STRATEGY
- ACTION
- CHALLENGE
- REFLEXES

PRESENTATION 65

▲Fairly reasonable title screens.
▼But there's a very sad lack of options and having no two-player mode is unforgivable.

GRAPHICS 61

▲The backgrounds aren't too bad and the boss sprites are a fair size.
▼The sprites are bland and nondescript and suffer from a terminal flicker. The maximum of three sprites onscreen is pitiful.

SOUND 67

▼Serves its purpose as far as it goes but is completely unforgettable and adds nothing to the overall effect.

PLAYABILITY 62

▲Easy enough to control and get into.
▼But there's very little difference between the various characters' moves, there's not enough enemy sprites, and the whole thing is all very samey and dull.

LASTABILITY 60

▲A goodly number of levels
▼But they're not hard. Little difference between normal and hard levels and no incentive to come back once you've gone through it.

OVERALL 63

Sadness abounds in this unimaginative and dated beat 'em up. Although not completely awful it's just too average to warrant more than a spark of interest which quickly dies when you've started playing it.

EXCITEMENT

ALERT

Don't miss the May issue of MegaTech!
It's a massive 116 pages of the latest and greatest Megadrive stuff including:
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1-2 PLAYERS

PRICE	TBA
BY	TAKARA
RELEASE	TBA

OPTIONS

CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES: UNLIMITED
SKILL LEVELS: 3
RESPONSIVENESS: AWFUL
GAME DIFFICULTY: HARD

1ST DAY SCORE

456785789

ORIGIN

Based on the coin-op of the same name, which belongs to SNK's Neo Geo system. The game's a spoof of Japanese

HOW TO CONTROL

Using the joypad and, funnily enough, a combination of button presses, take your chosen monster into battle against a plethora of other similarly disgruntled monsters. Destroying a few cities along the way.

- **A** Punch/Grapple
- **B** Kick/Throw
- **C** Run
- **S** Starts and pauses the game

HOW TO PLAY

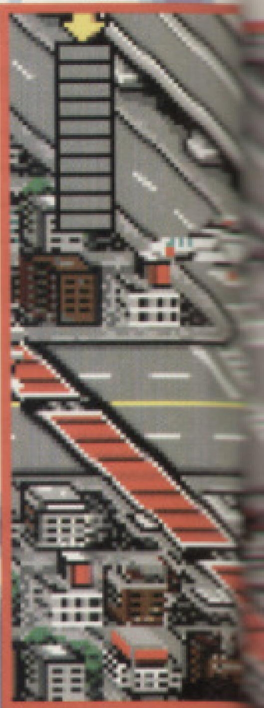
Beat the other monster to a pulp. Jump on top of him and stamp hard — hey presto, victory!

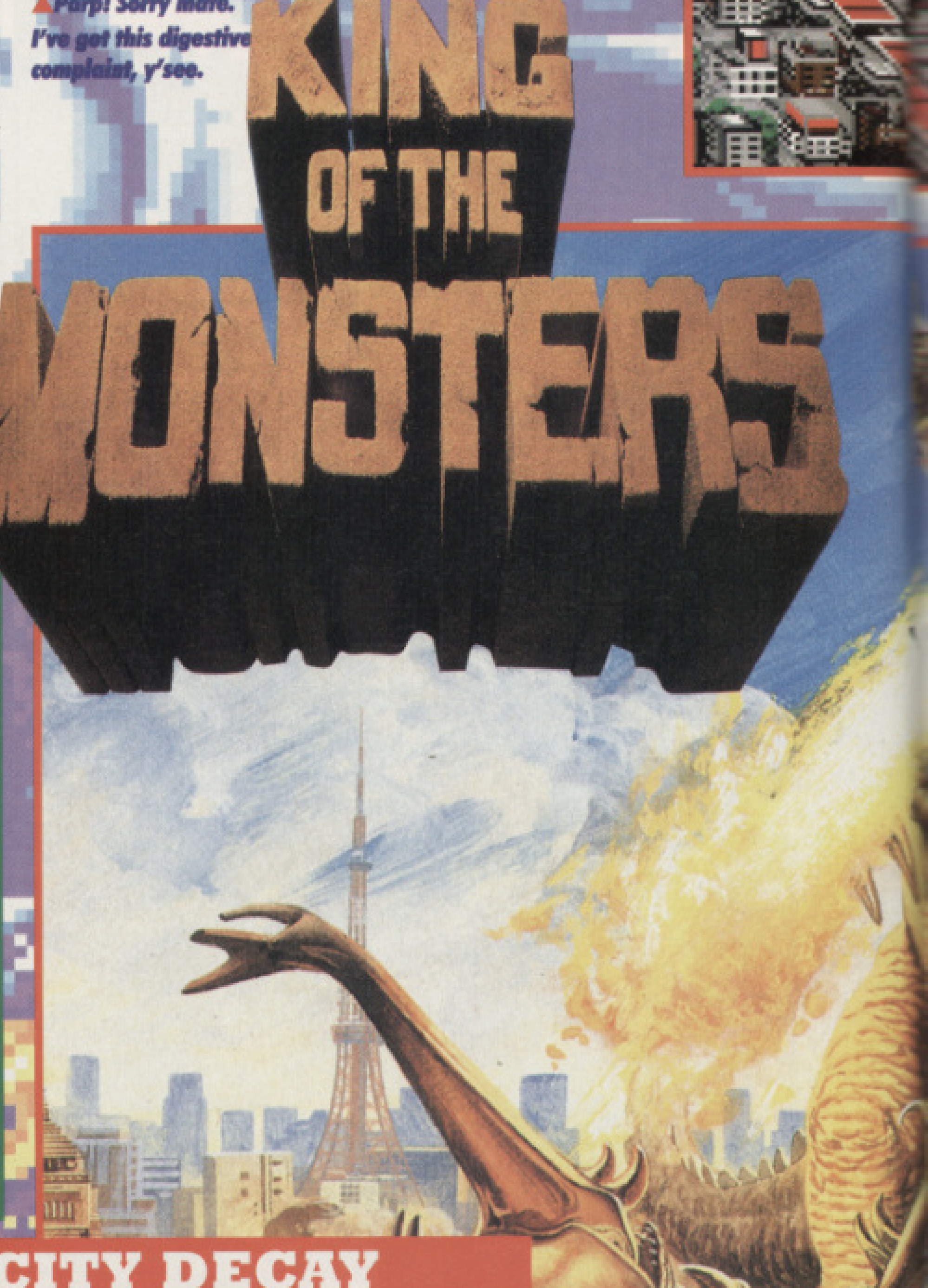
"Come back Chuck!", shrieked Jackie as her love jumped into the cab of his articulated lorry. Chuck was the bravest Chewits driver in the world, and when the monsters began fighting inside the city, he volunteered to bait the skyscraping creatures with his secret weapon — the monster pack of sweets.

Actually, it was a complete failure. Jackie watched as the monsters shared the truck, the Chewits and then nibbled on Chuck's intestines. Never mind, she thought, he did have halitosis. But the threat of the monsters was undiminished. They had waded across the bay like a pair of massive Thunderbirds puppets. Their tough rubber/papier maché hides could withstand the fiercest onslaught of the tanks, boats planes, and their feet trampled buildings underfoot. Destruction was only their secondary aim, since there quarrel was the equivalent of a mutant arm-wrestling contest. All part, Jackie mused, of living in a scale model town.



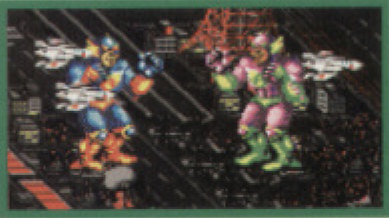
▲ Parp! Sorry mate. I've got this digestive complaint, y'see.





CIVIL DEFENCE

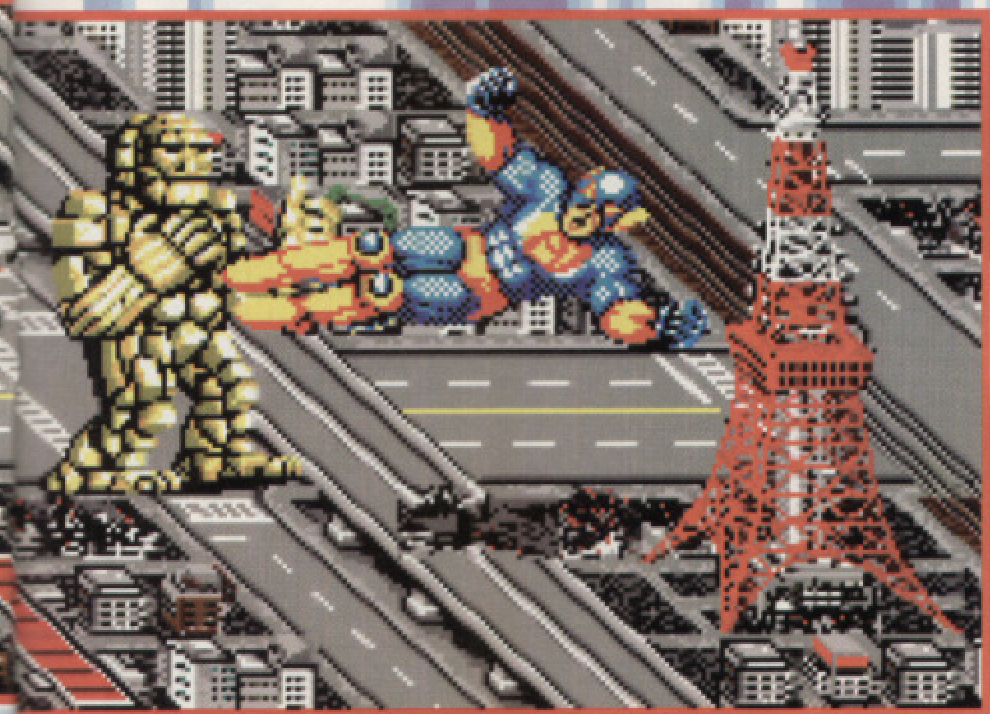
The monster squabbles don't go unchallenged by the municipalities that are being flattened. Dad's Army is called out in all manner of defensive ploys. Tanks, jets, bombers and gunships all take potshots at the combatants. The land and sea based units may be squashed easily, and the monsters can pluck an airborne unit like a sparrow, and throw it at their enemy.



INNER CITY DECAY

The playing area for each round is spread out over four screens' worth. At the perimeter of this area are electric barriers that act as 'ropes' to throw your opponent on, or bounce off for a running attack. However, the barriers temporarily stun anything that touches them. The rest of the city is yours to rampage over. Indeed, you get a bonus for the more houses you flatten and lives you ruin.







COMMENT



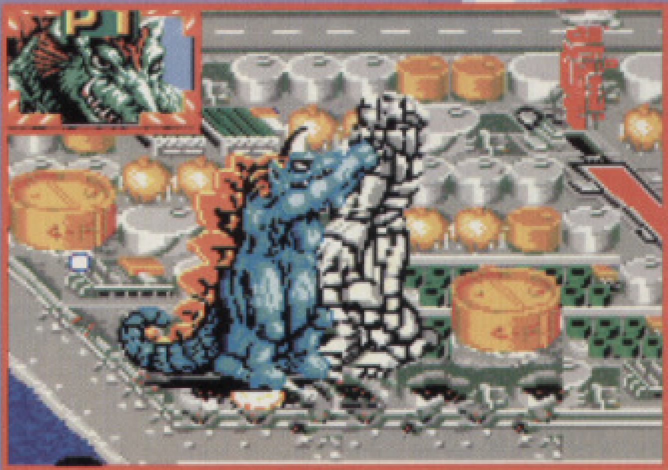
Grrr! Haven't these people ever heard of play-testing? King of the Monsters was a pretty lukewarm coin-op, but it's been reduced even further to a damned unplayable Megadrive debacle. Let's strip away the outside layers: yes, the graphics are pretty appaling; yes, the sound is an aural mockery of melody, but both are superior to the most turgidly designed beat 'em up in history. The monsters are less than responsive. Apart from basic movement, trying to execute any tactics is a hit or miss affair. Once you are in a grapple, the outcome is very unpredictable. The unfluid, minimal animation doesn't help your timing either. But if the control is bad, the game structure is... very bad! Rounds last for ages as monsters constantly struggle up, even when their energy bar is fully gone. Monsters that should be weakened suddenly start winning all the grapples, and in head-to-head mode, players continue even before a winner is announced. It's ridiculous that a farrago like this should be foisted upon Sega owners at all. Full body swerve.

FOUR MONSTROSITIES

There are four monsters to choose in the single or head-to-head games. Each has their own special power and mode of attack, as well as a 'distinctive' appearance. You may pit the same monster against itself. And they are:

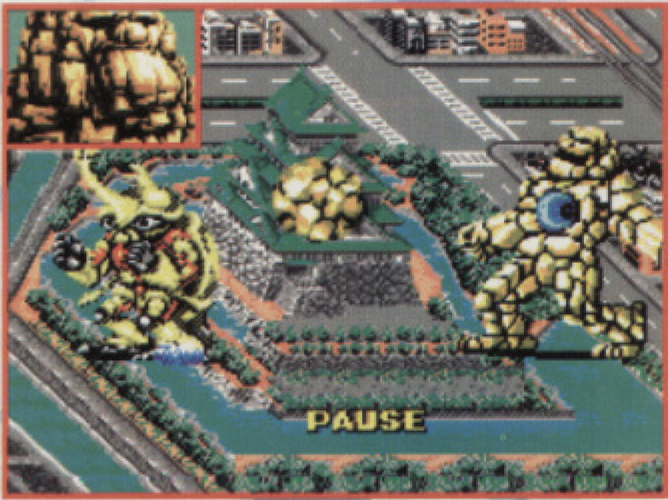
GEON

Big, scaly reptilian creature, Geon bears a remarkable resemblance to Godzilla, and indeed the pair are often mistaken for each other at Sainsburys. Geon's hobbies are neck-biting, tail-tumbling and he's just finished a night school module in fire breathing, his special ability.



ROCKY

Rocky by name, and Rocky by nature — since Rocky is made mainly of rock. He is rather like the strange Thing from the Fantastic Four, but doesn't cry as often. He enjoys beating people to a pulp, and has the special power of creating big boulders to hurl.



PLACES OF INTEREST

Every city has its eye-catching spots of stunning architecture, like Megaport's Golden Gate bridge, and Castle City's big Pagoda. Feel free to punch and kick these to rubble for more points, thus destroying years' of work in seconds.



COMMENT



JAZ

I can't believe it! This could and should have been a veritable fest of apocalyptic annihilation, complete chaos and madcap mayhem. But it's not! With few moves available to the player, a limited combat area and very little variety in the gameplay, King of the Monsters completely fails to capitalise on its potential as a mega beat 'em up and is instead a boring and tedious fighting game. The demolition of the cityscape should have been real fun, but buildings simply get flattened as your unresponsive monster skates slowly about the combat arena slapping about his opponent, rather than being destroyed by any sort of deliberate monster vandalism. Fighting is made a real chore by the lack of moves and after a couple of sessions - even with two players - it all becomes very dull indeed. If you want a real monster fighting game, wait for Streetfighter II!

BEETLE-MANIA

Beetle may look an intimidating chap, but his friends call him Roach. A childhood watching wrestling on TV has made him fond of wrestler's moves, like the piledriver and throat squeeze. His main talking point is his special 'horn-throwing' power (!).



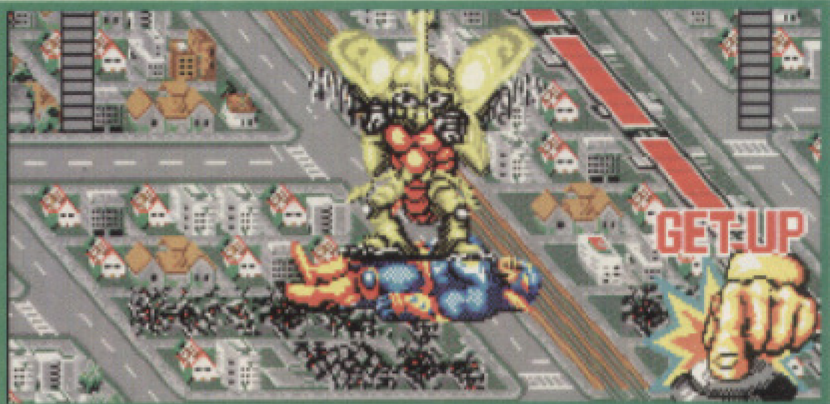
ASTRO GUY

The aptly named Astro Guy is a true space cadet in the art of fighting. This glorified kitchen appliance has a fondness for overhead throws and dropkicks, but his true glory is only seen when he powers up his secret laser weapon.



NAME OF THE GAME

The gameplay is a basic wrestle-fest. Throw your opponent around to reduce his energy bar, shown at the screen's top. When the opponent's out flat, jump on top to pin him. A count of three is needed to win. The fight consists of one round. Hard falls releases a 'P' symbol for the thrower. Collecting a whole bar of these increases the special power of the monster.



LONG TERM REPORT

HOUR	■	■	■	■	■
DAY	■	■	■	■	□
WEEK	■	■	■	■	□
MONTH	■	□	□	□	□
YEAR	□	□	□	□	□

BREAKDOWN

STRATEGY	■	□	□	□	□
ACTION	■	■	■	□	□
CHALLENGE	■	■	■	□	□
REFLEXES	■	■	■	■	□

PRESENTATION 73

▲Options to alter the difficulty and time. Wisely, the choice to fight the same player against each other exists.
▼No other options, and pretty unpolished presentation all round.

GRAPHICS 65

▲Some backdrops are interesting, and the game has a slight graphic flavour of the films it parodies.
▼The overall effect is spoiled by lack of definition and extremely poor animation

SOUND 51

▼Yuk! It's horrible. The music is atrocious and squealing (no option to silence it) but the sound effects are no better, with rough unconvincing samples.

PLAYABILITY 74

▼Instantly unappealing to play, King of the Monsters suffers from having few moves that are unspectacular to see, and struggles against a hideous control method.

LASTABILITY 56

▼Apart from playing like a mongrel from moment one, only four characters to master, and few moves, doesn't offer lasting appeal.

OVERALL 55

A highly unattractive, uninspiring and unplayable fighting game, that will hopefully prove just as unpopular. There are plenty of better beat 'em ups on Megadrive . Check Streets of Rage II or Final Fight CD before looking at this.

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1 PLAYER

PRICE	£39.99
BY	DOMARK
RELEASE	JULY

OPTIONS

CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES: PASSWORD
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: POOR
GAME DIFFICULTY: HARD

1ST DAY SCORE

Finished Mission One.

ORIGIN

This game is a flight sim based on the main Russian 'enemy' fighter aircraft, the MiG 29.

HOW TO CONTROL

The joypad mimics plane joystick movements. With the A button, up and down control plane throttle.

- **A** Opens Views Menu/Throttle
- **B** Opens Arms Menu
- **C** Opens Options Menu/Select
- **S** Starts and pauses the game.

HOW TO PLAY

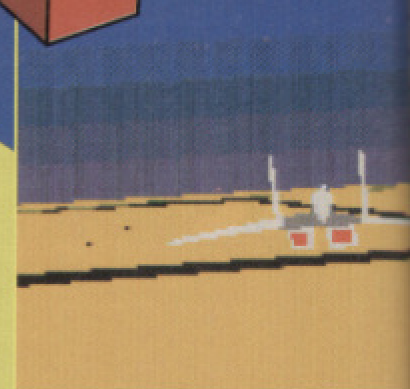
Follow the instructions given in the mission briefing. Take off from airfields and deal with ground and air targets.



The most important piece of kit for a modern army is a fast, effective fighter, to strike deep into the heart of the enemy's war machine. To this end, the Russians developed the MiG series, ending in the MiG 29, arguably on a par with the F15 Strike Eagle, the world's most celebrated fighter aircraft.

In Domark's new eponymous flight sim, the versatility of the MiG 29 is fully exploited. Five missions, and a training flight take you on land and sea based missions, using advanced laser-guided missile technology to pinpoint industrial and military targets. Avoiding civilian or 'collateral' damage is a priority, considering the closeness of tower blocks to the target sites. The Megadrive has always suffered from the lack of a serious flight sim, with all the malarkey of taking off and mid-air refuelling. Do all the dials, menus and options of MiG 29 redress this balance? Read on.

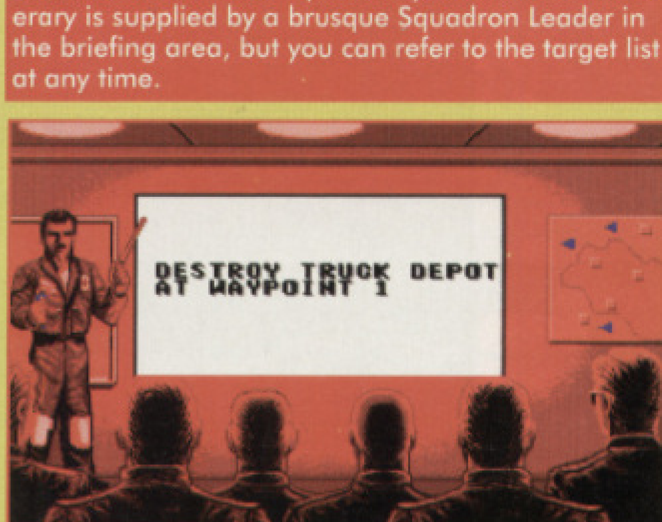






PRIME TARGETS

Each of the five missions is split into a series of attack runs, on missile batteries, air-bases and some of the enemies' Special Operations. Your itinerary is supplied by a brusque Squadron Leader in the briefing area, but you can refer to the target list at any time.

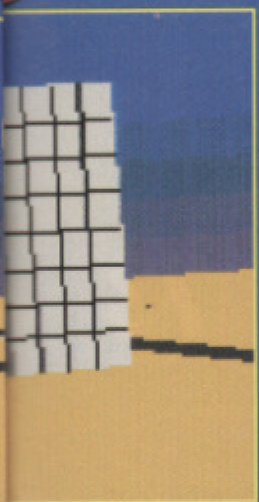


▲ *Who is making that humming noise! Stop it at once!*



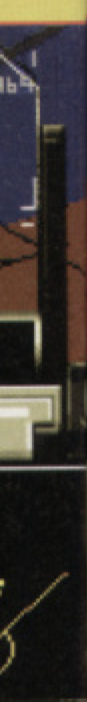
▲ *Right a bit, left a bit, right... Oh your useless at directions*













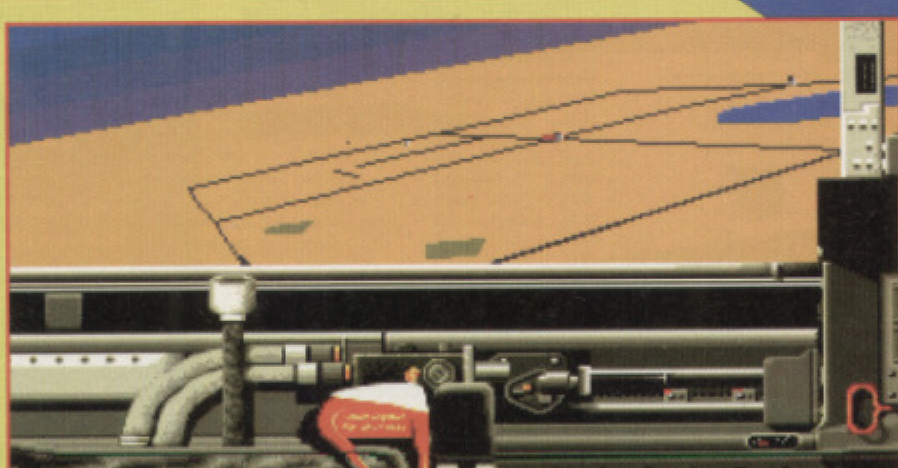
HUD

There are two ways of viewing the action from the pilot's position. The full panel view has a wad of instruments and dials to observe, and offers a limited prospect of the action. At the centre of the panel is a forward radar, which is useful for targetting, and the full panel view alerts you to throttle level and plane damage. The other option is the HUD display, which is computer-generated and cast onto the canopy. The most useful features are the digital altitude meter and the artificial horizon, which shows the rate of ascent or descent.



MAPPY

The mission map should be used with the panel compass to locate targets. The map scrolls over several screens, and enemy targets are marked as red, friendly bases marked as green, with mission way-points numbered in order. Your MiG is also shown on the map, which also functions as a pause mode.





▼ *A large Mig! ...yesterday.*



▲ *We thank you for flying Dan Air. Please don't wind down the windows while the plane is in flight.*

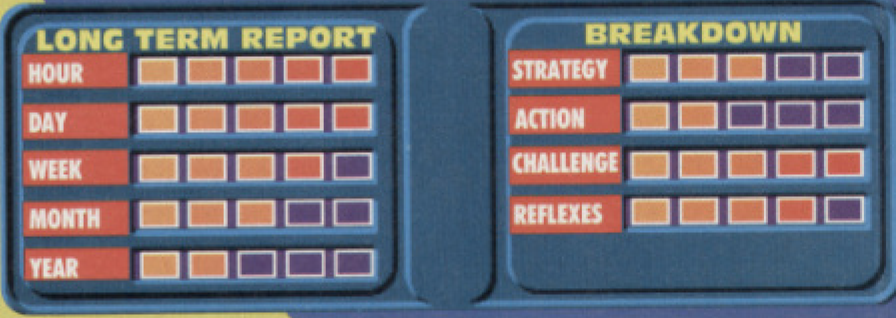
COMMENT



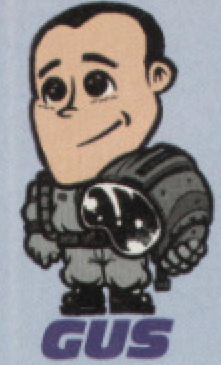
ROB

Games like this depend very much on experience and taste. I'm not much of a fan of involved sims like MiG 29, and tend to avoid them when they arrive in the office. Despite this, I can still tell a good sim from a bad one, and MiG 29 seems to fall somewhere in the middle. The vector graphics succeed in grasping some sense of realism and depth, but the bland backdrops mean the screen is occupied mostly by plain blue or shades of brown. This can lead to difficulties judging how close you are to the ground and before you know it you've crashed and burned! There are plenty of options, meaning that strategically there are endless opportunities to use your noodle, but what might seem like a good idea in theory can turn into disaster in practice. The plane takes ages to get to grips with, and even when you think you've figured out all of its little oddities it's still capable of churning up an unexpected quirk to catch you off guard. These criticisms need not make this game all that awful, but the cold and functional character of MiG 29 make it inexcusably boring and slow. Now I am aware that my lack of enthusiasm for the genre may colour this argument, but if there was serious fun in the area it succeeded in avoiding me.

ons



COMMENT



Let me be honest — I really wanted to like MiG 29, I even thought I *should* like MiG 29, but I didn't. At all. At first I was impressed. The vector graphics seem as fast as previous flight sims like LHX, and the level of depth in the sim is noticeable. But when it comes to gameplay, MiG 29 left me really bored. The most annoying fact is the poor handling of the plane, and the sudden unpredictable dips it makes. Whether this is the realism of poor Russian aeronautics, I don't know. The result is a frustrating control method. Having to work through menus to change missiles or view the map also slows the game down. Also, although the graphics look good, they don't do a very good job of relating how close the ground actually is, so your eye is constantly on the altitude meter. This may sound like an exercise in 'skill', but I personally found it a bore. Not to be too cruel, MiG 29 is actually quite like a PC game, and probably repays some hard effort put into learning its nuances. On a console, it all looks too slow and involved to be worth it.







▲ *Ah! The sky is your oyster! (?)*

VIEWPOINT

MiG 29 offers you a plethora of different viewing positions of the actions. Choose the tower as you take off for an impressive sight as your plane zooms off the tarmac. Once in the air, you may view the MiG from many external positions, and some revealing places, like the head of one of your missiles, or even one of your targets.

AUTO VON PILOT

Flying yourself to your destination is tiresome, and frankly dangerous, so thank heaven for the auto-flight modes offered on the options menu. Autopilot takes you to your next scheduled target, and autoland takes the problems of an approach out of your hands.



▲*This is Mean Machines MiG to Milton Keynes Control. I'm over Dixons, planning to land in front of Woolworths. Sure is one pretty city you've got yourselves...*

PRESENTATION 86

▲ Lots of options, a training mission, and touches like the briefing room. The crash sequences are neat.
▼ Accessing the functions through menus is a bad idea — it slows play.

GRAPHICS 81

▲ Clear vectors moving at a reasonable speed, and interesting effects created by the range of viewpoints.
▼ The graphics fail to give an impression of height, which is often fatal.

SOUND 73

▲ Nice music on title screen, and the in-game effects are clear and realistic.
▼ Sound is limited throughout most of the game.

PLAYABILITY 71

▲ There are a lot of functions to monitor, lots of ways to fly the plane, and the challenge of the missions is considerable.
▼ The game lacks any real sense of pace or fun.

LASTABILITY 79

▲ Five missions, each presenting a major challenge, means a lot of long term play.
▼ The range of action seems quite limited, so the prospect of five missions may be off-putting.

OVERALL 75

A very PC-type of game to put on a console, and the impressive features don't make up for the flaccid gameplay. Simulation fans will love it — however, most Megadrive owners will shy away from the slow, unexciting gameplay.

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1-2 PLAYERS

PRICE	TBA
BY	VIRGIN
RELEASE	TBA

OPTIONS

CONTROL: JOYPAD
GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM
CONTINUES: NONE
SKILL LEVELS: ONE
RESPONSIVENESS: VERY FLOATY

1ST DAY SCORE

16200

ORIGIN

The MacDonalds chain of fast-food restaurants for one thing, a zillion other platform games for another.

HOW TO CONTROL

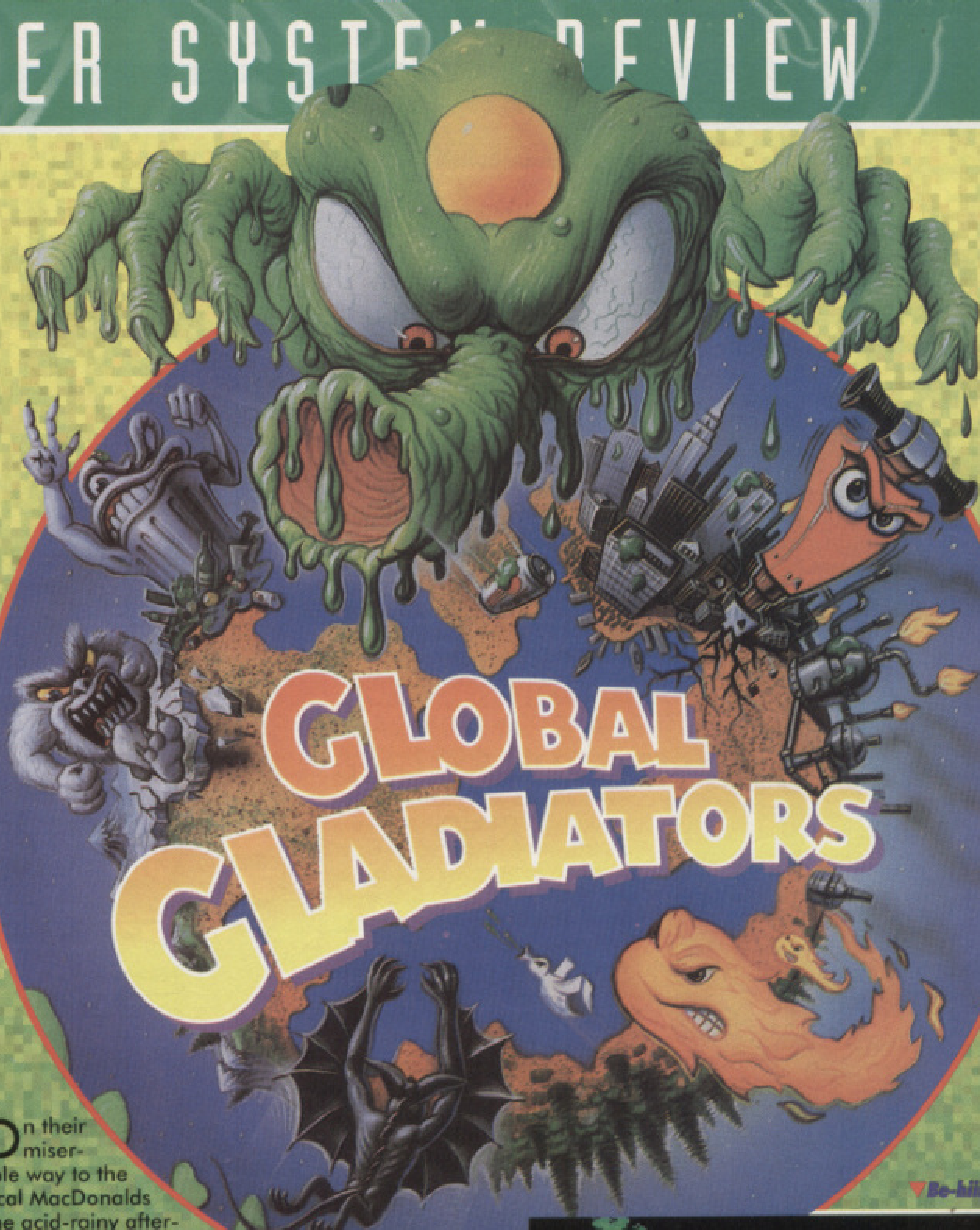
Basically, jump around the place, sliming the odd baddie and avoiding the many pitfalls. Pretty standard platform style.

1 Makes Mick or Mack jump.

2 Fires the slime gun.

HOW TO PLAY

Guide either Mick or Mack across the hazardous, platform laden environs of Macdonaldland.



GLOBAL GLADIATORS

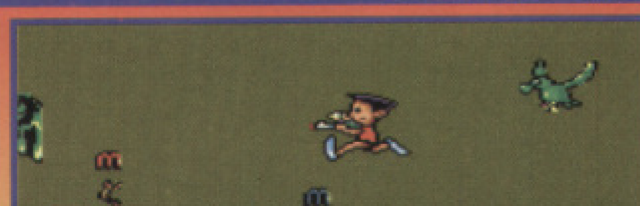
On their miserable way to the local MacDonalds one acid-rainy afternoon, Mick and his best pal Mack happen across a strange newspaper stand. Not having ever noticed this feature in the high street before the slavering pair stop and browse with interest at the many comics that the vendor has for sale. Now, one particular cover catches Mack's eye, so he hands over the cash and off he and Mick go to stuff their gimpy faces.

The comic's story tells the tale of 'The Global Gladiators', an ozone-friendly, super hero duo with muscles the size of cabbages and the combined strength of a thousand compost heaps. Much impressed by the Gladiators' green activities Mick and Mack long to be like their new found heroes. As chance would have it, a strange looking man, with frizzy orange hair and a painted white face, appears beside their fixed plastic seats and bolted-down table promising them such an opportunity! After a worried glance at their burgers and quick feel of each others foreheads the friends decide that this clown is for real and immediately agree to take him up on the offer. As Mick or Mack it is now your job to hone this pair into the most Globalinest Gladiatorinest dudes the world has ever seen and put an end to world pollution. The lads do battle through four different locations of our polluted world, using their slime guns to wash away the result of one crisp packet too many in Virgin's latest platform bonanza for the Master System.

▼Be-hiind you!



GOING AIRB



COMMENT



PAUL

The high quality presentation found in the 16-bit version of this game is outstanding, likewise I am utterly gobsmacked by the graphic and sonic masterpiece that is Global Gladiators on the Master System. This title, however, plays like a dog's hind leg. The control over Mick or Mack is way too floaty and there are far too many opportunies for disaster as soon as the war against pollution commences. It is unbearable to watch helplessly as one wrong move at the topmost area of a level causes a chain reaction whereby the chosen Gladiator finds himself dissappearing off the bottom of the screen! This is a direct result of having your character rebound about half an inch off an enemy sprite each time they collide. It's fine that they sustain damage of course, but the loss of a life from being bounced off a ledge in many situations is asking too much of anyone's patience! It is also a bit of a chore when all that Mick or Mack are aiming for is the collection of letter 'm's. They may as well be stamps! There's no pleasure in sliming the enemy either with this ridiculous sloppy gun! Nothing alters in the gameplay as the game progresses, the bonus stages lak variety as well and so there's no great satisfaction in reaching them. As a thing of beauty this is a shining example but at its heart is a pile of garbage.

COLLECTING THE M Ts



Awaiting Mick or Mack at the end of each level is the strange looking fellow that they encountered in the MacDonalds. He's waving his arms around like a looney and refuses to let either lad go any further unless they possess a specified amount of letter 'M's. Weirdo! Humour him by collecting as many of these items as is superhumanly possible to get by, though their is a special reward for collecting letter 'M's above and beyond the call of duty.



▲*'Take us to your leader, Earthling!'*



▲*Having just picked his nose Mick fiendishly disgards the evidence!*

SLAG

By collecting ten or more letter 'M's Mick or Mack are awarded with a rubbish bonus stage, which doesn't mean to say that is just full of garbage! A Global Gladiator is presented with three waste bins to fill and then showered with assorted trash for their troubles. This is all very much to their advantage as placing each item of trash in the correct bin is rewarded with many points. For example bottles go in the glass bin, newspapers belong in the paper container and cans belong with the rest of the metal objects. It may sound easy but Mick or Mack but look-out for the anvil that crops. There's a time limit too! If Mick or Mack go the distance an extra life is theirs, hoorah!.

COMMENT

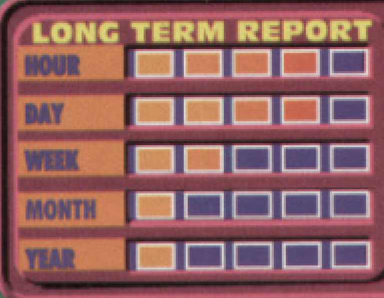


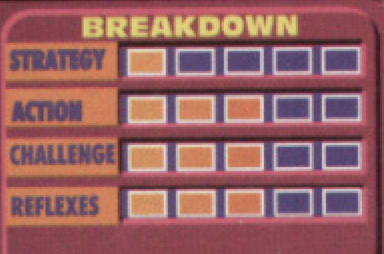
RICH

Basically, this is exactly the same as the Megadrive version — except that it's a lot tougher. This is fine by me, as the 16-bit game was about as difficult to complete as putting on a hat. However, Global Gladiators is still lacking. First of all, as Paul says, the gameplay remains identical throughout with only the graphics and meanies changing. It must be said that this does promote boredom very quickly. The controls are also a pain too. Whereas the Megadrive version's controls had absolute precision, the Master System version is perhaps over-responsive which does lead to many an annoying death. It's a shame really because Global Gladiators is definitely the most graphically pleasing game I've seen on the Master System since Sonic II — I just wish that the gameplay was up to a similar standard.

RNE

Should those bonus items such as extra lives hordes of valuable 'M's look out of reach, chances are that they are suspended above an invisible platform. As a result, leaps of faith on Mick and Mack's behalf are often very rewarding though there a similar amount of tragic consequences awaiting if their trust is betrayed. Death, for one!





PRESENTATION 84

▲ A mildly entertaining attract sequence followed by a series of in-game demos.
▼ The options are something of a token gesture.

GRAPHICS 94

▲ Large, skillfully drawn and smoothly animated sprites act out their roles against the bold scenery.

SOUND 91

▲ The game's funky music lives up to the standard set by the graphics.

PLAYABILITY 74

▲ It's challenging and quite fast paced...
▼ Although the movement of Mick and Mack is terribly floaty and frustrating.

LASTABILITY 78

▲ The levels are quite large and the challenge level is consistently quite high, though not necessarily for all the right reasons.
▼ Frustration with the control factor is a big turn off.

OVERALL 77

Mick and Mack's impressive looking cleansing scheme comes a cropper on the rotting banana skin that is the gameplay. A bit more thought on the control method would have made this a winner.



1-2 PLAYERS

PRICE	IMPORT
BY	TRADEWEST
RELEASE	OUT NOW

OPTIONS

CONTROL: JOYPAD
CONTINUES: 3
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: OKAY
GAME DIFFICULTY: VERY TOUGH

1ST DAY SCORE

621,000

ORIGIN

Battletoads is a conversion of the award winning Nintendo Entertainment System game.

HOW TO CONTROL

The many styles of play in Battletoads dictate that a seperate control method is used for each. They're all pretty instinctive, though, so no worries, as Australians apparently say.

- **A** Nowt.
- **B** Attack/Pick up weapon.
- **C** To quote Kris Kross: "Jump, jump!"
- **S** Starts and pauses the game.

HOW TO PLAY

Guide your Battletoad through scrolling levels of dexterity-testing traps and thrilling hand-to-hand combat!

We could ramble on all day about this game's absurd storyline — but we here at MEAN MACHINES reckon that the game's blurb spells it all out far more succinctly than we could ever put it. So, here goes:

"When the Dark Queen kidnaps both your best buddy and the best looking girl this side of the Mazallion Star Cluster — what are you going to do about it?

"Are you gonna cry? Hide? Call the Starcops? No way! Because you're a BATTLETOAD and BATTLETOADS don't cry, hide or call for help. BATTLETOADS get real MAD — and then they get EVEN!



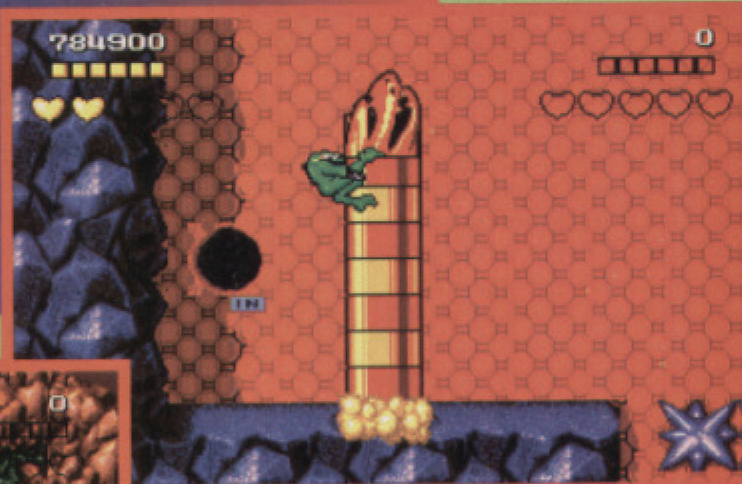
"So, strap on your Blaster, power-up the Toadster, and get on down to the Dark Queen's planet — but, watch out 'toad — this lady's bad, and she's got a whole mess of really nasty surprises lined up for you — like the Psyko Pigs, the Mutant Ratpack, Robo-Manus and the Saturn Toadtrap, to name but a few.

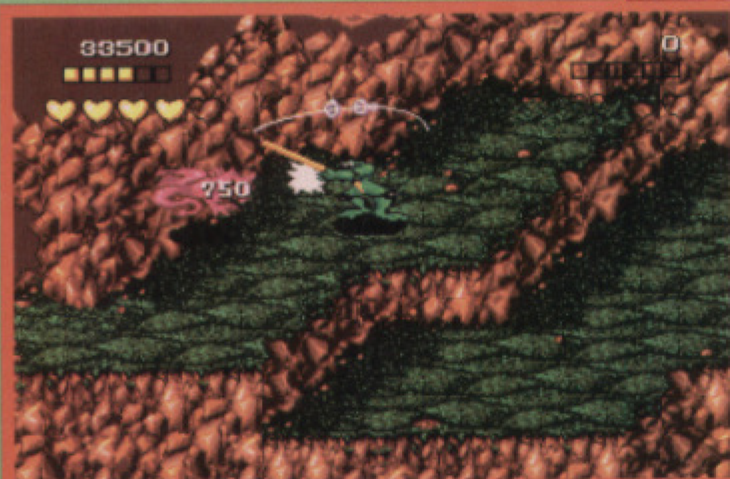
"You're gonna need all your fighting skills to defeat her — the Battletoad Butt, the Big Bad Boot and the Nuclear Knuckles. Hey, and don't forget to take along the Jet Turbo, the Space Board and the Speed Bike. Because you're gonna need 'em all, 'toad, if you're gonna rescue your friends and get the frog outta there with your green skin intact!"

Indeed.

BATTLETOADS ACTION

Battletoads scores highly in the variety department. Each level tests your reflexes and reactions in different ways. Here's a selection of action from the game.





▲ *Have at thee, fluffy inoffensive pink monster.*

STAGE ONE: RAGNAROK'S CANYON

The Battletoads land on the Dark Queen's world, only to discover that she's left a welcoming committee of Psyko Pigs to beat you up. Slap them about a bit, master the winged beasts and destroy the massive biped boss in order to progress.

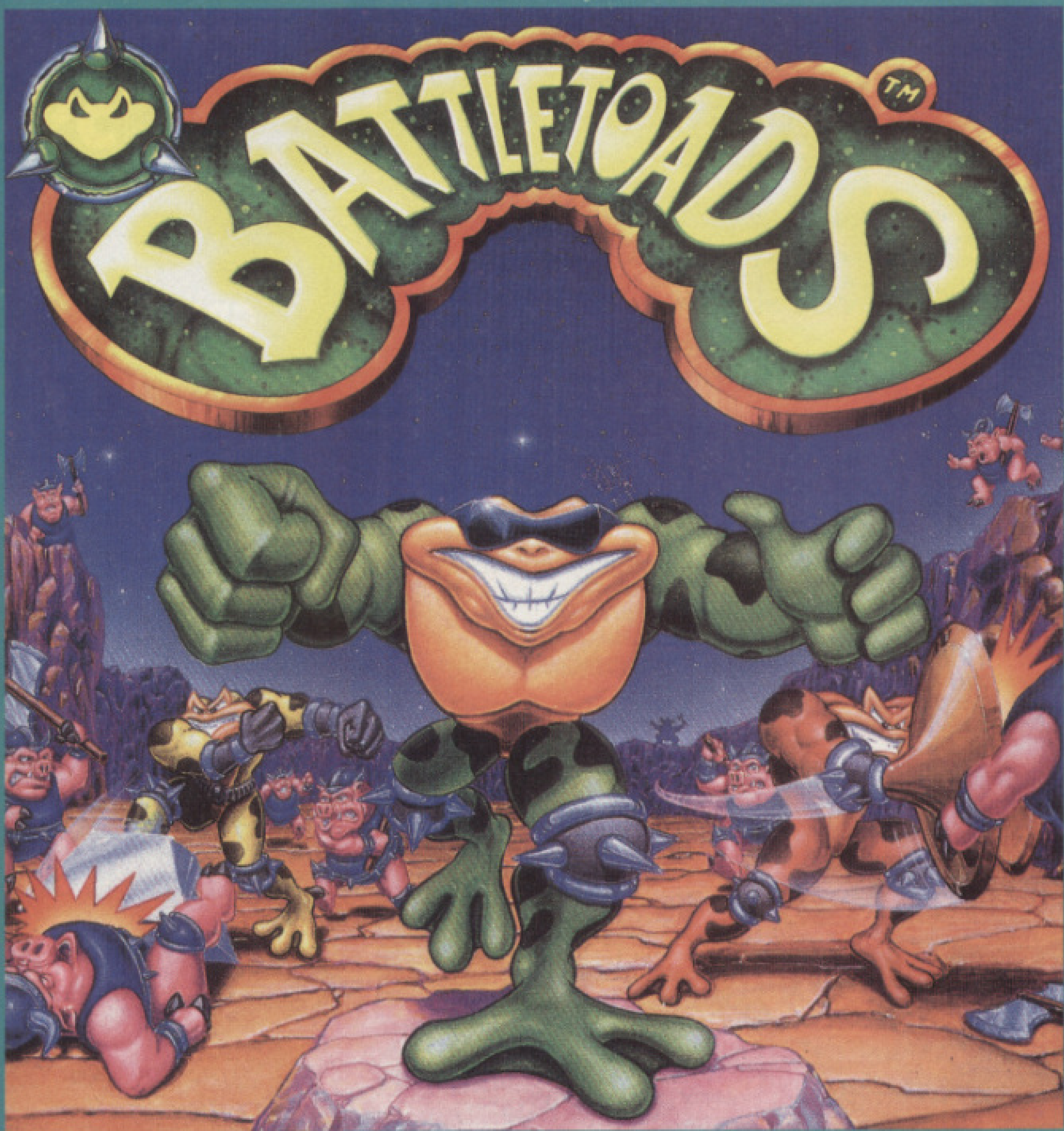
STAGE TWO: WOOKIE HOLE

The 'toads abseil down the impact crater, repeatedly beating up the avian inhabitants to build up a stack of extra lives. The Dark Queen's left behind some evil robots and electrical fields to make life a bit more difficult...





▲ *"But Tom, what d'you expect me to write about this?" moaned Andy on seeing Tom's poor choice of caption pics.*



COMMENT



RICH

"Aiiieeeee!", "Arghhhhh!" and "Mmnnnr rraghhh!" are a printable selection of some of the exclamations of frustration this game forced me to cry! It's tough with a capital T! Be it the mega-difficult Jet Turbo section, the slidey ice level (that skids you into massive spikes — arghh!) or the amazingly frustrating snake pit stage, you're guaranteed to screaming abuse at the console. However, a few days on and I'm beginning to warm to the game — simply because it is so tough. So, for you players moaning about Sega games being so easy, I definitely recommend this. For players who don't like to be frustrated, stay well away from this game — it'll just make you angry and unsociable — and will turn your face a very embarrassing shade of red.



▲ *Spikey balls. Big, icy poles. Chalfont alert. Chalfont alert!!*

STAGE THREE: TURBO TUNNEL

The amphibian lads beat up some mutant rats and unpack their Jet Turbos! The only way to cross the chasm is to leap from rock to rock, avoiding cunningly placed walls that the Dark Queen's left behind. Oooh, the stinker!







▲ *Zit involved in a horrific runaway golfing cart/pink cheese incident yesterday. Probably.*

COMMENT



JAZ

It's unusual to find a game that's really frustrating, yet still manages to be horribly addictive, but this is one such game. I think its secret is that you get a little bit further with every game, but never as far as you think you can go. So you get really annoyed and have another go to get a bit further, then another, and another... and you end up playing for hours. But even though the game is annoying, it's great fun to play. It's very challenging and offers plenty of variety, there are lots of high-scoring bonuses to go for, the graphics are decent, with plenty of humorous touches, and the music and effects suit the action perfectly. If you're after something different, check it out.

STAGE FOUR: ARCTIC CAVERNS

Slidey platforms abound here in the Arctic Caverns! No problem... or is it? Perhaps when you're sliding uncontrollably towards a mass of spikes that kill on contact you might think differently. Killer snowmen and stalagmites help matters none.



▲ *Argh! a giant Fox's Glacier Mint! Get it away from me!*



STAGE FIVE: SURF CITY

Surf's up dudes... or something. Here, the 'toads are under attack from more of the Dark Queen's rampaging hordes. Also adding to the carnage are lethal logs and surf board-annihilating spikes.

STAGE SIX: KARNATH'S LAIR

The bane of Rich's life during 12 — 14 March, 1993. This rock hard level (named after an old Rare game called Staff of Karnath for the C64) has you clambering onto the backs of moving snakes as you try to scale the massive caverns. Sounds simple? As the gibbering wreck that is now Rich will tell you, it isn't. At all.



▲ *Hmm. I don't I can think of a clean, decent caption for this one...*



▲ *...Or this one! I thought this was a game about nice little frogs anyway!*



▲ *Ah that's more like it! Here goes. Mind the... Fly. Oh forget it.*

AND THERE'S MORE...

We don't want to give the entire game, but suffice to say, there's plenty more where that came, including the debut of the last form of amphibian transport — the Battletoad Speed Bike!

THANKS TO...

Thanks to AMS Electronics for supplying with our review copy of Battletoads. Contact them on 081 201 0535 for more information.

LONG TERM REPORT	
HOUR	■■■■■
DAY	■■■■□
WEEK	■■■□□
MONTH	■■■□□
YEAR	□□□□□

BREAKDOWN	
STRATEGY	■□□□□
ACTION	■■■□□
CHALLENGE	■■■■■
REFLEXES	■■■■■

PRESENTATION 59

▲ Some fairly decent cut screen intermissions...
▼ No options to tweak whatsoever.

GRAPHICS 77

▲ The scrolling's smooth and the animation fluid.
▼ But it does have the look of an 8-bit game.

SOUND 77

▲ A fairly good range of sound effects and hi-energy music backs the frenetic proceedings, enhancing atmosphere.

PLAYABILITY 78

▲ The action is fast and fun, and initially compelling especially with two-players.- But some incredibly hard levels make the game extremely frustrating.exploration very rewarding!

LASTABILITY 82

▲ There are loads of levels to conquer — and some of them are extremely difficult.
▼ Novice players, or those who can't handle frustrating games will go off this very quickly.

OVERALL 79

Although it is just a graphically enhanced version of an 8-bit game, Battletoads is very playable and poses a very tough challenge.

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OPTIONS

CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES: UNLIMITED
SKILL LEVELS: 3
RESPONSIVENESS: VERY GOOD
GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM

1ST DAY SCORE

COMPLETE THE FIRST CHAPTER

ORIGIN

Shining Force is the second instalment of Sega's 'Shining and the Darkness' saga, the forthcoming Landstalker is the third.

HOW TO CONTROL

The joypad directions enable you to move your hero. Using the joypad buttons brings up the action icons that enable you to talk to other characters, trade and suchlike.

- **A** Select a window.
- **B** Cancel a request.
- **C** Select a window.
- **S** Starts the adventure.

HOW TO PLAY

Search the many towns and villages in the land of Rune for volunteers to join the Shining Force — an army that opposes the evil forces at work in Rune.

SHINING

Guardiana, a picturesque outpost in the land of Rune, is home to a race of people known as the 'Ancients'. For the past ten centuries these people have guarded the 'Gate of Ancients', a prison to the mighty Dark Dragon, also known as the 'Lord of Darkness'. A thousand years has faded the memory of the events that placed this beast in such a place and so the Ancients are now enjoying a time of peace and prosperity. Yet somewhere in the darkest corner of Rune an evil soul named Dark Sol is plotting to make a mess of everything by freeing this dreaded beast. He's amassed an army of hellish creatures for the task — the dreaded Runefaust! Now this is all well and good, at least it is from a distance. However, as the hero of Rune, it is your task to come and sort this mess out before the situation becomes too scary.

The King of Guardiana requests that you assemble an army of warriors. A 'Shining Force' to combat the darkness that threatens. From this point onwards many long journeys await and all are loaded with the threat of battle. The people of Rune await their hero and, believe it or not, this could be you!

MEGA GAME

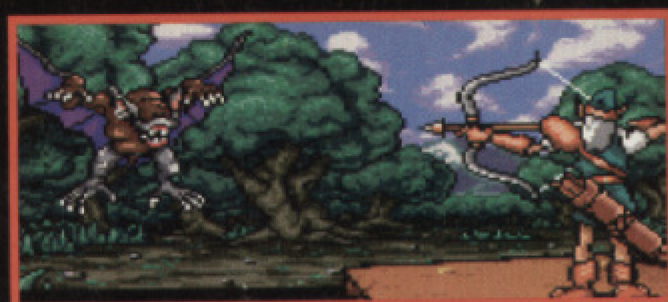
BOSS NOVA

After the first audience with Guardiana's King his attendant is immediately assigned to the Shining Force as an advisor. This green-skinned, ancient looking half-elf's name is Nova and he dutifully takes his post at the Shining Force's headquarters. The team have headquarters in all the towns of Rune and it is here that the tale's central character seeks Nova's words of wisdom regarding battle tactics. Nova's duties also include assigning missions to the most suitable members of the Shining Force at the player's request. Nova also keeps records on each of the team's progress in the form of status cards. The headquarter buildings are marked by a shield with Guardiana's crest emblazoned on it — a plain, green circle.



The gist of this one is that Gong's in a bad way.

Our heroes encounter a Rad Automatic lookalike.





FORCE FEED



In response to the King of Guardiana's initial request, the hero of Shining Force begins his search for those that would bravely oppose the onslaught of the Runefaust invasion. No sooner has he left the King's presence than the first five volunteers rush after him, including our hero's close friend, Lowe. This warrior quintet are the foundation of the Shining Force and consist of Luke the warrior, Ken the knight; Tao the apprentice mage and Hans who is an elven archer. Lowe offers his services as a healer but is willing to fight when necessary. As the story unfolds and the many miles of Rune are freed from their plague in the name of light, the Shining Force grows as more interesting and useful characters join the fold.



▼ *A scene from "Honey, I blew up the Shining Force".*



If you hold your breath for a long time, this happens. ▶



▼*"I suppose an innuendo based on "chopper" will do. "*

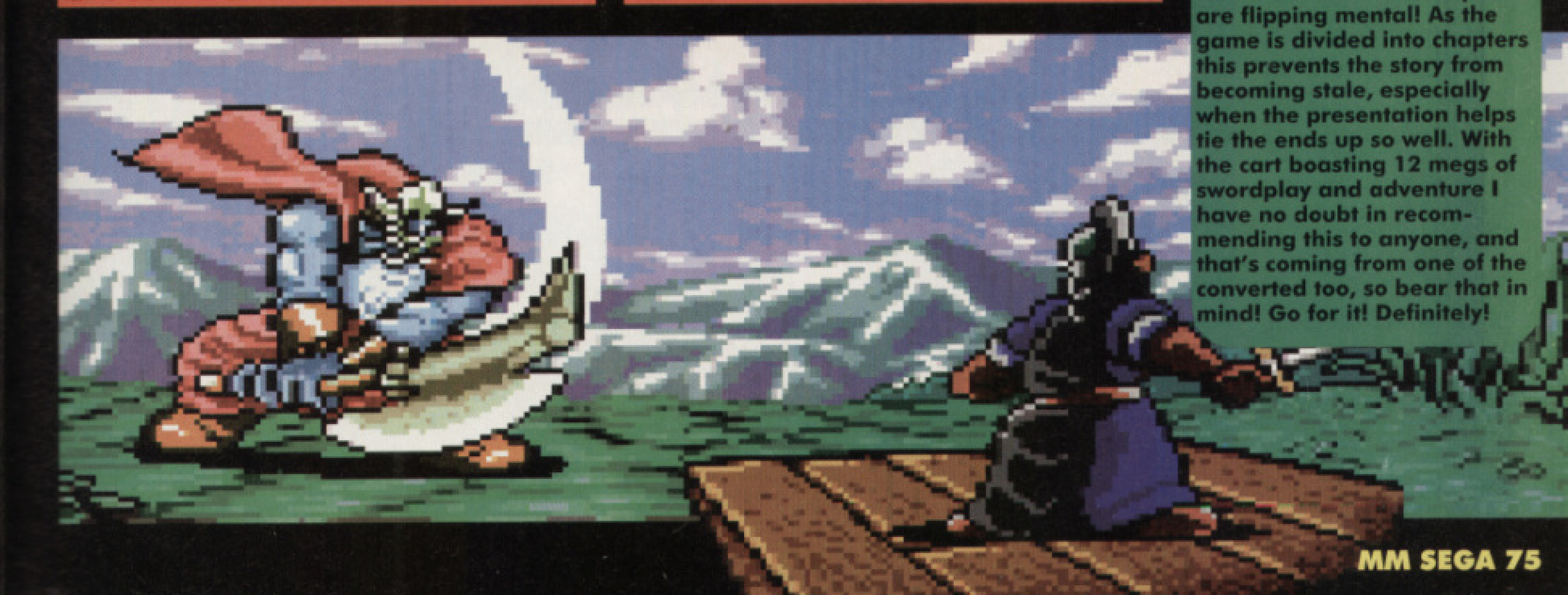


COMMENT



PAUL

I haven't been so glued to a game since the time when I first bought my Megadrive almost four years ago! Everything that I look for in a game — stylish graphics, great music, atmosphere and irresistible playability are all present here. The situation is made all the more outstanding for me because Shining Force is an RPG and I usually shy away from such games as they are often too long-winded and very tedious to watch. What makes the game so extra special is that there is a real sense of control over the combat sections. Consequently I find myself wincing at every blow that my comrades take and cheering heartily at every fallen foe. It sounds crazy but then play the game for yourself and see if you don't do the same! Though the graphics appear quite basic at first they certainly improve as the Shining Force progress and earn themselves promotions. Every member of the team is a true individual and have their own trademark methods of attack. As the characters' skills advance so their moves become more intricate making it all the more entertaining as a hero pirouettes then swipes an enemy out of action with just one blow! Exploration of the towns is very compelling too and often very funny — some of the locals who live in these places are flipping mental! As the game is divided into chapters this prevents the story from becoming stale, especially when the presentation helps tie the ends up so well. With the cart boasting 12 megs of swordplay and adventure I have no doubt in recommending this to anyone, and that's coming from one of the converted too, so bear that in mind! Go for it! Definitely!



COMMENT

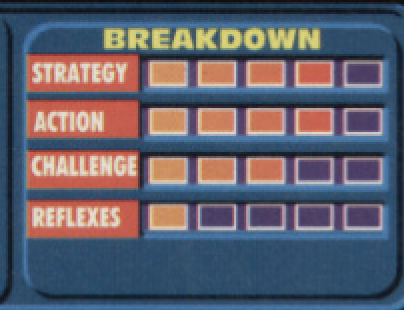


GUS

In the ancient land of the Megadrive, the tribe of Sega had been long in wait for a new RPG. And then came Shining Force, and there was much joy! This is fab stuff: the sort of game to make you stay up way past bed time, just to get to the next town, or learn a new spell. It works because it's a perfect blend of strategy and adventuring. Instead of stupid 'random encounters', that make most RPG a chore to play, you are allowed to see your enemies in advance, and devise battle tactics using all of your band. Combat becomes as interesting as the moseying round cities. The adventuring is just as much fun, with a brilliant plot, cleverly unravelled, and some killer punchlines delivered by some of the in-game characters. Playing it for the second and third time reveals secrets missed on previous occasions. There's just something about Shining Force that makes it a classic game. Perhaps it's the excellent standard of graphics and the sensible presentation. Whatever it is, it makes it a highly desirable purchase.







INSIDE MOVES



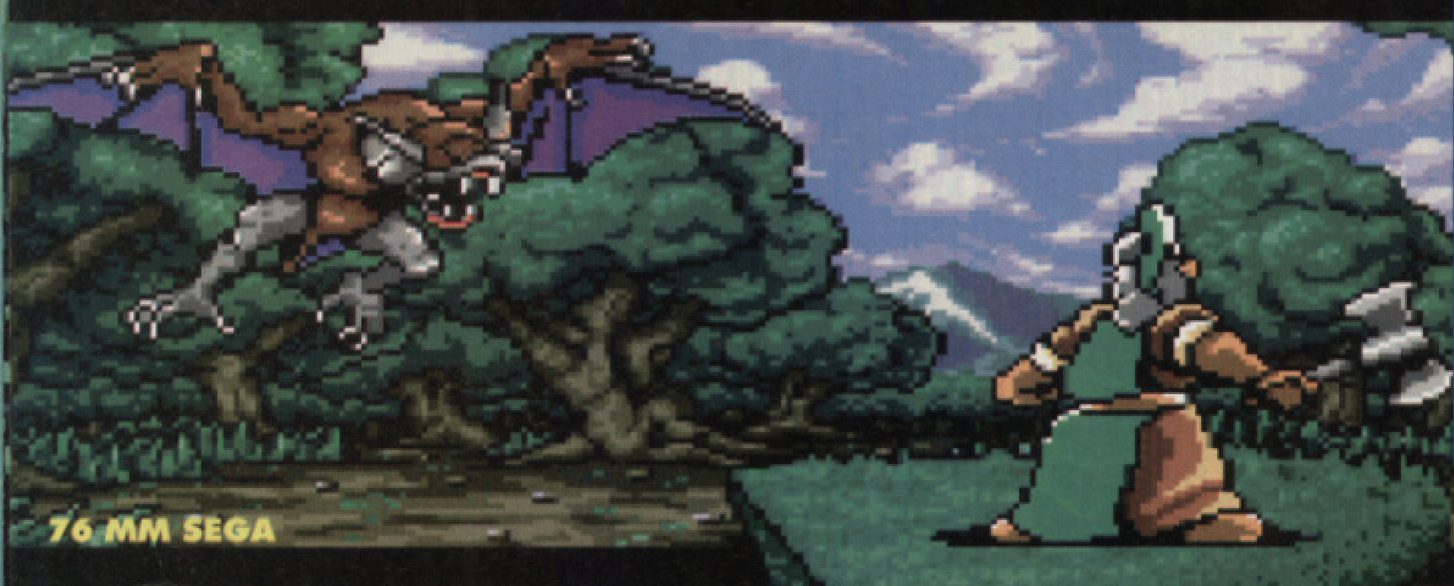
The further our heroes get into the heart of Runefaust-occupied territory, the stronger their opponents become. Dark Sol's minions start off simple enough and are not quite so hideous as their reputation implies. However, matters get steadily worse and the only way that Rune's last hope counters the horrors ahead is by gaining valuable experience points in battle.

Combat is represented by a plan view of both side's forces with all characters having a specified area in which they move. Land-based members of the Shining Force posse are restricted by the landscape but airborne warriors are free to fly where they will. Battle commences as soon as a member from either side is within range of the other at which point the viewpoint changes to a mightily impressive, three dimensional rendition of the action.

YIELD! YIELD!

Our worthy heroes' will alone is enough to carry them through the first few battles successfully however it isn't long until their miserable selection of armour and arms pales in comparison to that of the Runefaust army. So it's just as well that there are shops in all of the towns of Rune that supply more advanced equipment alongside special herbs for medicinal purposes on the occasion that a warrior is injured in battle. Further exploration of the towns also reveals items that are hidden away in chests or other less obvious places. It's worth giving everywhere a thorough search before moving on to the next confrontation with Runefaust as such items are often more powerful than those offered by the shops!

▼ *So... dress up in a stupid costume will you? Now you're mine!*



PRESENTATION

▲ All presentation screens suit the nature of the game perfectly well.

88

GRAPHICS

▲ Brilliant battle sequences and great attention to detail throughout. The graphics improve as the plot thickens.

89

SOUND

▲ A wide selection of war themes and rural melodies greet the ears.

86

PLAYABILITY

▲ Though there is much depth to the gameplay the control method is very straight forward. This makes exploration very rewarding!

▼ The combat system is a trifle on the sad side.

92

LASTABILITY

▲ The game is enormous! That in itself ensures a long lasting challenge. It also means that it's possible to miss things along the way, meaning that its worth playing again.

90

OVERALL

91

A beautifully crafted piece of Megadrive software with just the right balance of action and adventure to satisfy all needs.

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CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES: UNLIMITED
SKILL LEVELS: 4
RESPONSIVENESS: GOOD
GAME DIFFICULTY: VARIABLE

1ST DAY SCORE

COMPLETE THE FOURTH FLOOR

ORIGIN

Originally, Splatterhouse was a Namco coin-op. This is the second sequel to arrive on the Megadrive.

HOW TO CONTROL

Splatterhouse III uses the basic beat 'em up control method, pioneered by the Final Fight coin-op. Button and movement combinations do different attack moves.

- **A** Allows Rick to 'Power-Up'
- **B** Acts as the attack button.
- **C** Prompts Rick to jump.
- **S** Starts the game and calls up the map screen when the game is paused.

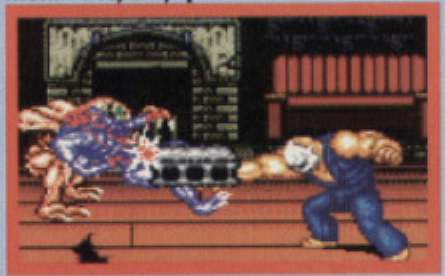
HOW TO PLAY

Beat up the meanies Final Fight style, locate power-ups and 1-UPs and then bdefeat the numerous bosses. Fascinating..

SPLATTER



▲ *To quote Gary Harrod: "Punch to the..." Yes, um, quite.*



◀ *Eat concrete and suffer!*

▼ *Rick's stick-on french loaves dipose of the marauding meanie (yesterday).*





It is the fourth anniversary of Rick's worrisome and terrible four year relationship with a girl named Jennifer, and he is gradually realising that the whole charade is growing rather stale. In fact rancid might be a better description, especially when rotting corpses and horrific mutants are becoming more and more a part of every day life for the couple. It seems that Rick cannot turn his back for fear of Jessica or their young son David being mercilessly subjected to all kinds of ill-mannered activities and this all started on the day that Rick discovered a strange mask buried beneath their garden. This enchanted artifact now has a hold over Rick and, for the most part, he is able to ignore it. However the mask acts as a receptive for anything most people would do well to stay clear of, yet somehow Rick and family are now irresistibly guided to fighting evil wherever it may dwell with this mysterious mask at the helm.

This cart tells the tale of Rick and co's third involuntary, holy mission against evil and, as is customary for most evil forces these days, takes place in a huge mansion. Evil forces appreciate a roof over their heads just like anybody else! Splatter house III is a 16-meg, gory beat 'em up venture on behalf of Namco aiming to better the previous two parts of this gruesome saga.The player now has control over Rick's vertical movement as opposed to the limited horizontal only method of before, for example. Somewhere in an expansive house both Jennifer and young David are held captive and so it's up to you, as Rick, to follow the terrible whim of the mask and exorcise the evil that is restraining them!



▲ *Another MEAN MACHINES exclusive! Take That's latest (and perhaps greatest) dance routine.*

BRAIN SORE MASKER



Since Rick's last dealings with the mask this persistent item of head gear has grown in power. Now the mask isn't so much worn by Rick, rather *it wears him!* Unfortunately Rick has no choice in the matter but this involuntary collaboration certainly has its advantages. Although Rick is a mighty strapping lad to start with, the mask provides him with extra power should he supply it with the required fuel — one or more crystal ball is all that this required at which point the mask's power is represented by a meter at the bottom left of the screen. As long as there is an evil presence in the room the mask's power is available at Rick's bidding. However the mask doesn't see the funny side of calling for assistance just for a laugh and promptly wastes all the collected power if there is no threat. Spoil sport!

HOUSE - 3





▲ Some groinal attacks and a butt to the face from Rick.



▲ Rick uses the rancid power of his armpits to inflict bodily injury on some decomposing carcasses. And why not?



▲ This is what 16-meg carts are all about: brutality to children's toys... except that this one is possessed by a ghoul! Aieeeee!

SPIRIT LEVEL

Being surrounded by living things that resemble a Chernobyl butcher's shop window is a dangerous situation indeed and so Rick is in constantly open to some kind of nasty injury or another. For this reason extra energy and power for the mask is found lying on the floor of the mansion in the form of beating hearts and crystal balls respectively. Rick is also able to steal such power-ups by defeating the larger, more grotesque creatures that are shuffling about such as the enormous, walking stomachs.





▼ Aieeeee! What a picture! Rick partakes in what could be described as some "off-the-wrist" activities.







COMMENT



PAUL

Splatter House III promises 16 megs of gore, superb gameplay and suggests massive game area in which all this takes place, but delivers none of this. Instead we are presented with a series of featureless rooms that host a shameful example of how boring beat 'em ups are with enemies that hardly ever attack and follow highly predictable patterns when they do! The music hasn't improved much over the last game, neither have the sound effects considering that there is so much memory space available to improve their clarity. Many of the screams from the ugly sprites sound like they're coming from a portable radio whose batteries are running low, they crackle so much! When all's said and done this game is a waste. It hasn't improved on the original and is worse, in my opinion, than Splatter House II. In fact I'd much prefer it if Namco released an arcade perfect rendition of their classic coin-op instead of producing these poor sequels. Rick's transformation into a hulk like super being is great but it's mostly to no avail seeing as the enemies fall so easily anyway. Also impressive is the way that the enemy sprites materialise in different ways onto the screen instead of just strolling on, stage right. However to experience any enjoyment at all the game requires playing on Game Master difficulty setting, but even then it is only the bosses and time limit that are affected to any degree by this. I wish that the situation were different and that all the impressive attract sequences and digitised, mid-level screens hadn't gone to waste but this they have, so save your money and save your soul too because it is all very boring indeed.

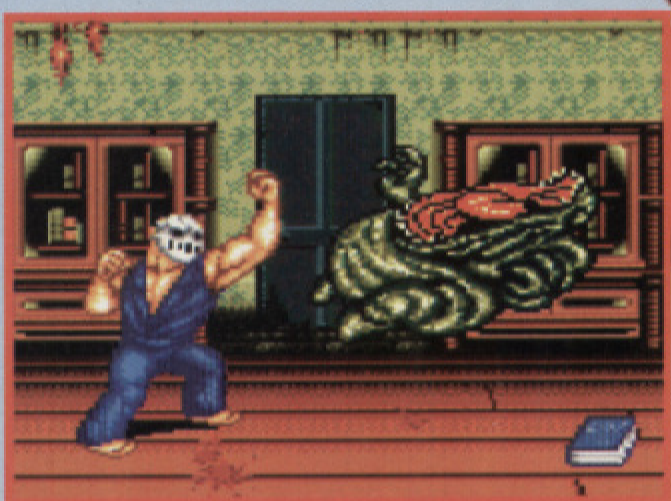
COMMENT



I love the Splatter House coin-op, and with this Megadrive sequel appearing on a massive 16-meg game cartridge I was expecting Splatter House III to be a huge game packed with horror, gore and variety. Imagine my disappointment when I found it's not that huge, isn't particularly horrible or gory, and variety is distinctly lacking. It's rather like a crap Streets of Rage II with few moves and some gruesome-looking, but easy-to-beat opponents. Much of the gameplay boils down to simply wandering from room to room encountering the same baddies over and over again. After a while it quickly becomes dull — there's little difference from level to level, and the game simply isn't challenging enough. Bah!

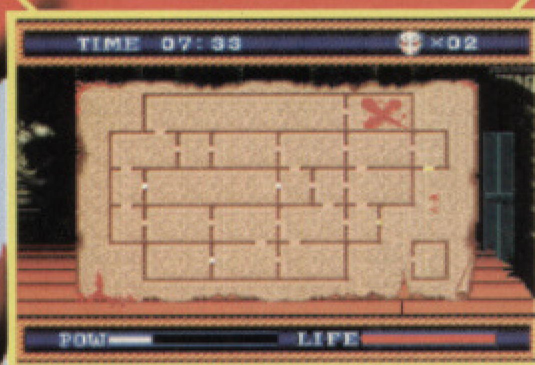


▼ *The meanie is instantly despatched by Rick's dress sense. He's got the dungarees, but where's the curtain hair-do?*



SEEKIN' AND A CREAKIN'

The mansion is constructed with six floors and Rick 'cleanses' them all one at a time. Each floor is a sprawling maze of rooms and only the mask knows the exact layout. For this reason Rick consults the mask for directions and the player is rewarded by a map on screen that shows everything he needs to know! There are some rooms that give the appearance of being inaccessible, but Rick needn't worry because there are doors marked in yellow which invariably lead him to them. Though the route to these rooms is often more dangerous than others the journey is usually worth it for the bonus items, such as extra lives, found there.



I WANT MORE LIFE!



What do masks do on their days off, then? Well it would appear that they all enjoy a good book, so this particular haunted mask rewards Rick with an extra chance if he finds any good reads lying about for him.



LONG TERM REPORT	
HOUR	■■■■□
DAY	■■■■□
WEEK	■■□□□
MONTH	■□□□□
YEAR	■□□□□

BREAKDOWN	
STRATEGY	■□□□□
ACTION	■■■□□
CHALLENGE	■■■□□
REFLEXES	■■■□□

PRESENTATION 91

▲ A long intro sequence greets and lures the player into believing that the game is something exceptional and the choice of difficulty settings is needed.

GRAPHICS 87

▲ Anything that moves is large and quite gruesome in a comic book kind of way.
▼ The backgrounds amount to static representations of rooms with very little interaction with the surroundings.

SOUND 84

▲ Musically the cart isn't too bad and the many tunes enhance the doom and gloom nature of the storyline.
▼ The sound effects are good and loud but sampled terribly!

PLAYABILITY 81

▲ Beating up a few monsters is entertaining for a short while.
▼ However going through the same motions for room after room soon becomes dull.

LASTABILITY 74

▲ It takes a special kind of person to dedicate an extended amount of time to this rather limited beat 'em up.

OVERALL 77

Though it may look and sound okay, Splatter House III offers nothing new except a wild imagination with nowhere to go. Beat 'em up and gore fans alike should find this a disappointment.

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MICKEY MOUSE 2

1 PLAYERS

PRICE	TBA
BY	SEGA/DISNEY
RELEASE	TBA

OPTIONS

CONTROL:
GAME DIFFICULTY:Medium
CONTINUES:Infinite
SKILL LEVELS:1
RESPONSIVENESS:Good

1ST DAY SCORE

Seven levels complete.

ORIGIN

If you've never heard of Mickey Mouse, welcome to planet Earth! Land of Illusion is the sequel to Castle of Illusion.

HOW TO CONTROL

Any one who's played the original Mickey game will be instantly at home here. Left and right move the hero, with the buttons causing different actions.

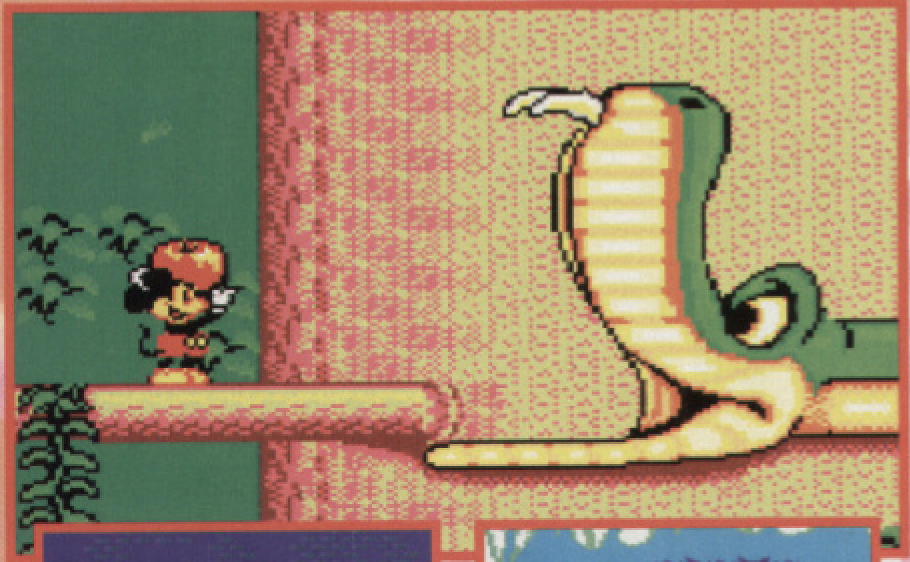
1 Pick up

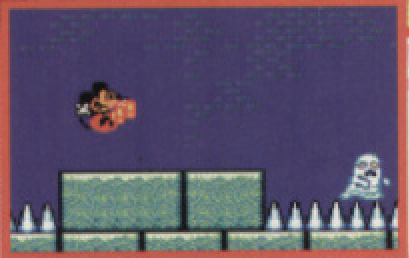
2 Jump

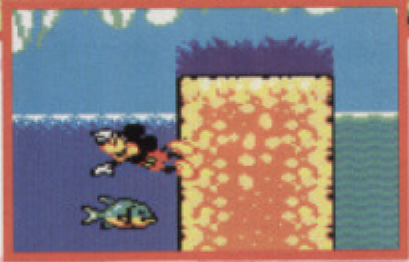
S Pause

HOW TO PLAY

Guide Mickey through a host of platform levels, picking up useful items along the way. Bottom bounce or throw objects to do away with his enemies.

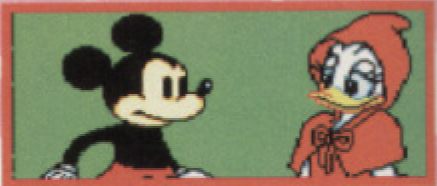






CHUCK ROCKS

Ever the resourceful rodent, Mickey grabs a variety of objects and does whatever he sees fit with them. Rocks are good to throw at enemies that might otherwise be difficult to dispose of (when Mickey is under water for instance), springs can be picked up and then used for a variety of springy-type activities, and pots are good for climbing on to make it that much easier for Mickey to scale cliffs and the like.



MICKEY

A long time ago, a rather smart git called Walt Disney came up with the idea of transforming the pestilent rodent from dirty household terrorist, guaranteed to frighten the life out of the faint hearted, into a cute and lovable character symbolising everything sweet, wonderful and ethically sound. Well, being the jammy git he was, it paid off and these days Mickey Mouse is a more familiar part of our lives than, well, some really very familiar things!

Owners of a Game Gear are no exception to this, and can expect lots of platform mayhem as Mickey Mouse 'butt bounces' again in the sequel to Castle of Illusion. The cunningly named Land of Illusion sees ole' saucer ears out to do some good as usual, going in search of a magic crystal with the Worlds happiness ever dependent on his success. The magic crystal had been stolen from some peaceful villagers by an evil phantom, now casting darkness across the land. So dutiful Mickey heads off to face endless baddies and end-of-level bosses in a quest for the crystals safe return.

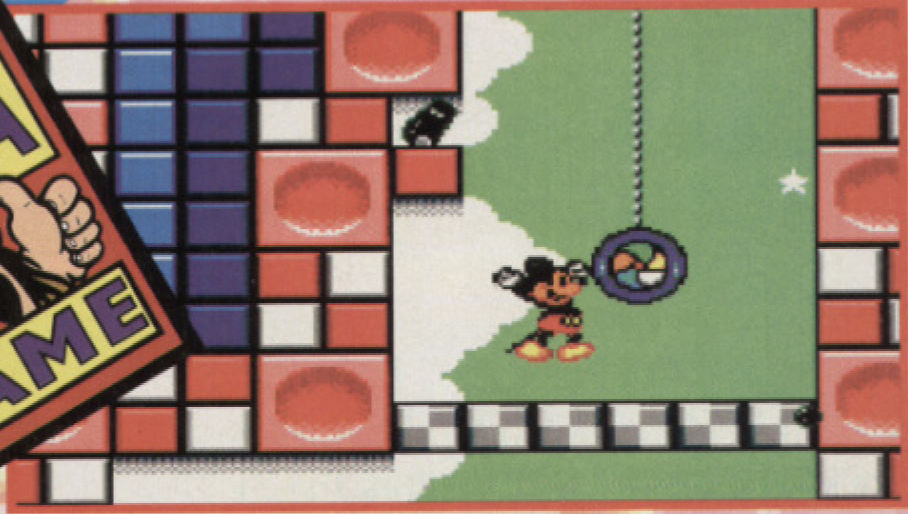
The mind boggling twist to this adventurous tale is that it's all in fact a dream! Falling asleep over a fairy story before bedtime, Mickey's fertile imagination sends him on this fantastical trip to the Land of Illusion. Someone must have put too much sugar in his Horlicks!

CHEST FEST

Something that Mickey comes across plenty of, as he bounds his way from level to level, are treasure chests. As you would expect, inside them there is something useful. Normally it is a piece of cake which replenishes energy, but occasionally it might be an extra life or something equally grand. These chests also make handy projectiles to pick up and lob at enemies.



MEGA GAME



IT'S NOT ALL BOUNCE, BOUNCE, BOUNCE!

Although Land of Illusion is primarily a straight forward platform romp, it does involve using a bit of the ole' noodle at times. Advice given by characters at various stages in the game often results in Mickey retracing his steps and finding new things on levels he has already been through. Sometimes going back is essential because success on later levels, the cavern stage for instance, relies on picking up shrinking potion earlier on so Mickey can squeeze through the minute tunnels.



▲ A mini Mickey legs it at speed away from a rampaging mollusc of doom... yesterday.

MOUSE 2

► Bruised bottoms ahoy as Mickey pulls off a bottom bomb. Owwww!



COMMENT

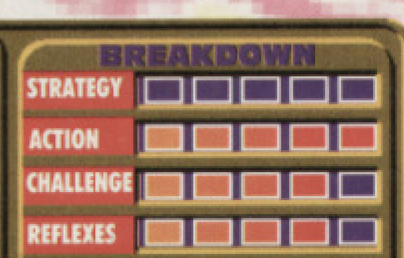


GUS

As my esteemed co-commentor says, this Game Gear version of Mickey Mouse II is identical to the brilliant Master System game, in graphics, sound and playability. What they both have is a clear edge over the first Mickey Mouse game, which looked nice, but didn't last that long. This is much more of a juicy gobstopper — brightly coloured, tasty and guaranteed to last for ages. The challenge is provided by some tough platform sections which require some thought to complete, and the puzzle element of going back and forward for objects. Basically, it's ace and essential buying for MS owners.







COMMENT



ROB

This version of Mickey Mouse II is identical to the Master System version. The graphics share the same liveliness and colour, the movements of the sprites being particularly fluid. In this department it matches its predecessor, and in all of the others it exceeds it. The platform action is more complex than Castle of Illusion, incorporating as it does a more quizzical tone. This also makes Land of Illusion more of a challenge, forcing you to step back to levels you thought you had sussed to get something else right. There are some more showpiece touches in this sequel as well, like the shrinking Mickey, the ability to throw everything you can pick up and so on. These factors succeed in making Mickey Mouse II advanced enough to give it credit in its own right, and deserving of attention, even if you've got the sequel. I've never been a fan of Mickey Mouse but, putting my Tom and Jerry loyalties to one side, this is one of the best platform games you are likely to see on the Game Gear.

PRESENTATION — 88

▲ There's plenty of good title and story sequences that liven up the action.

▼ Unfortunately, there are not any options to speak of, which could have enhanced the game.

GRAPHICS — 95

▲ Mickey Mouse II is awash with superb sprite definition and animation, colour, life and it's all very cute too!

SOUND — 92

▲ The 'cartunes' are annoyingly tinkly yet irritatingly catchy. The sound effects are in plentiful supply and are pretty good with it!

PLAYABILITY — 90

▲ The game's fast and always responsive, with well graduated difficulty. It's not frustrating at all which helps.

LASTABILITY — 90

▲ The platform action isn't especially easy and additional challenge comes from having to rack your brains every once in a while to cope with the cunning puzzles.

OVERALL — 92

Mickey Mouse II is much better than its predecessor, it's faster, more challenging and entertaining — probably the best arcade adventure for the Game Gear.

THE AD
WILLY



1 PLAYERS

PRICE	IMPORT
BY	DYNAMIX
RELEASE	OUT NOW

OPTIONS

CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES: NONE
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: SLOT LIKE
GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM

1ST DAY SCORE

N/A

ORIGIN

Willy Beamish was originally an IBM PC game. Only with the massive storage capacity of Mega-CD is a console version possible.

HOW TO CONTROL

Use the joypad to control a cursor. Zero in on an object to use it, or use the buttons detailed below to carry out menu selections. Easy, if a tad unwieldy.

- **A** Think/Select item.
- **B** Choose.
- **C** Change pointer mode.
- **S** Brings up the boredom-relieving balls.

HOW TO PLAY

Step into the adventurous shoes of Willy Beamish and save him from the horrors of the military cadet school in this point-and-click graphic adventure.

Life's tough when you're a young slip of lad — Just ask young Willy Beamish, cursed from birth by having both a stupid first name AND surname.

As we join him in his very own game, he is in what the game describes as "very deep do-do". Well, you'd probably be up the same creek without a certain instrument if your pet frog leapt from your shoulders and dislocated the headmaster's wig at the end-of-term address. Obviously, Mr Frick (for it is he) isn't impressed by that particular form of tomfoolery. Consequently, he's given you an extremely bad school report and ordered you to serve detention — on the last day or term! Aiiieeee!

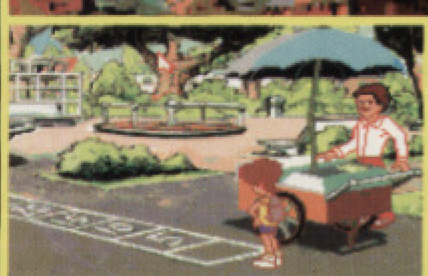
Serving the spell in detention is only Willy's tiniest concern. If that school report reaches his house, he's likely to be sent away to a military cadet school, rather than to high school like his mates! Willy needs YOUR help! You've got to take control of Willy and make sure that the dodgy report never reaches home — a tough task indeed. However, you start the game with a helpful edge. You are still the proud owner of Mr Frick's hairpiece...



SUPER SPACE K'NOIDTRIX

Located inside Willy's bedroom is this "smart" space shooter. It's a complete game-within-a-game and ranks as one of Willy's favourite arcade games! Basically, it's a cross between Super Space Invaders, Arkanoid and Tetris (as you can probably tell from the name). Blocks fall from the ceiling and you've got to blast them as quickly as possible. The blocks build up once they hit the floor of the well. Should they stack up to the top of the well, it's game over. Luckily, there are blaster power-ups to aid you on your quest. It's Willy's aim is to master this game and become the supreme champion of all-time.





▲ Wide-eyed with wonder, Willy stands there, looking for ages at his big brother's bed. What we want to know is, why?



WILLY BEAMISH: See that Willy Beamish? That's you, that is.

MEET THE BAND 'COS THE BOYS ARE HERE

The Adventures of Willy Beamish are awash with all manner of "interesting" personalities. Here's a quick selection.

...VENTURES OF ... BEAMISH





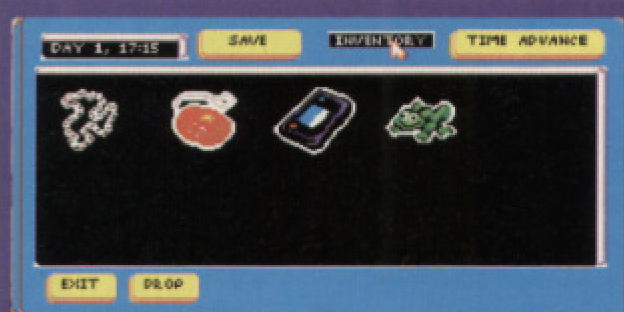
COMMENT



RICH

I applaud Dynamix in trying out a game that's as daring as Willy Beamish on the Mega-CD. It's amazing just how much data can be crammed onto one compact disc! The range of graphics in the game is astounding and the amount of sampled speech (though of a slightly dubious quality) is stunning. What I like about the game is the way the entire story continues no matter what choice you've made — there's always something new cropping up that you haven't seen before. Unfortunately, Willy Beamish suffers from three very prominent problems. First of all, there's not much in the way of real interaction. It's what you make Willy say that truly dictates how the game progresses and not much else. My second gripe concerns the control method, which is sluggish and unreliable at the best of times. However, the thing that really put me off Willy Beamish was the vast amount of disc access that the game uses. I was literally driven off the game because I couldn't wait about ten seconds just to move from one location to another. I'm glad that companies are using the Mega-CD for new types of console games, but I think I'm going to wait for the Secret of Monkey Island on CD for my adventuring needs.

INVENTORY ACTION



Willy's forever wearing a massive backpack — even during classes. It's not surprising as this is where he keeps all of his useful items, like his Game Buddy (tm) portable gaming unit, his yoyo and of course, his amphibian pal, Horny the frog (yes, that is his real name. We can only guess why Willy gave him that particular moniker).

TIME FOR A SHARP EXIT



Willy Beamish is played to a strict time table. However, there are times when there isn't much action going on. That's when the time advance mode comes into effect. Once selected, the timer is moved on to the next significant event — thus saving a lot of the player's time.



BRIANNA: A horrible name and a horrible attitude. Little sisters, don't you just hate them?



MOM: A bit of an American domestic stereotype, Mom is first found at the kitchen making dinner!



DAD: Hellbent on sending Willy to military school, Dad makes things quite difficult at the best of times...

COMMENT



ANDY

The adventures of Willy Beamish is a great exercise in graphical quality. The animation on both the cameos and the sprites is of an exceptional standard, and as you can see from the screenshots, the backdrops are amazing — obviously drawn by a real expert. The sound too, is awesome, with an unfeasibly amount of sampled speech and great effects. However, I just didn't really feel comfortable with the game. The problem is that the player isn't really in control. You just don't feel as though as you have much control of what happens to young Mister Beamish. The amount of options open to you is very small and some sections of the game — like the kitchen-with-Mom scene — are intensely dull. Like Rich, I'm happy to see new console game concepts, but there's still a lot of work to be done before we see true interactive cartoons on the Mega-CD.

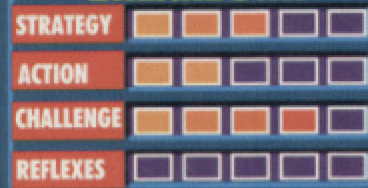
THANKS TO...

A massive "thank you!" goes out to Advance Console Entertainment of London for lending us a copy of The Adventures of Willy Beamish. Feel free to give them a call on 071 439 1185.

LONG TERM REPORT



BREAKDOWN



WORDS AND PICTURES



You can start a dialogue at any time with any of the game's characters. Just by selecting the appropriate icon and clicking on a character, a conversation is begun. Willy's choices of dialogue are shown in a box. You can "think" about each phrase (that is, hear it before he says it) by pressing A. Button B makes him say it. The "thinking" approach is a good idea, because sometimes, Willy's sarcastic tones change the meaning of the sentence completely!



THE NURSE: Illness rocketed when she joined the school. Perhaps it's something to do with her hands-on approach to medicine.



Well, what a brilliant picture this one is to write a three line caption about. What joy.



CARMINE: The cool dude who gets his kicks by indulging in juvenile delinquency.

The further you get into the game, the more characters you meet, such as Mr Frick, the school headmaster — Willy's arch enemy who has the power to send him to the dread military cadet school! Keep a look out for Dad too — make sure that your report card goes nowhere near him!



Ms GLASS: Firm evidence that compulsory retirement should be introduced for boring school teachers with irritating voices.



CHUBBY: The stereotyped fat lad who gains social acceptance by being nasty to everyone.

PRESENTATION 93

▲ Stunning. Although there aren't any options, you don't mind because the rest of the game is literally dripping in quality presentation!

GRAPHICS 93

▲ Once again, Willy Beamish excels, with a range of quality visuals the like you've never seen before on the Mega-CD. The sprites, backdrops and animation are all excellent.

SOUND 77

▲ The game is literally packed with hundreds of sampled conversations that unfold as the game progresses.
▼ Unfortunately, the in-game music is something of a shambles.

PLAYABILITY 66

▲ There's plenty to see in the game...
▼ ...But the slowness of the game and the almost constant disc accessing is enough to put you off.

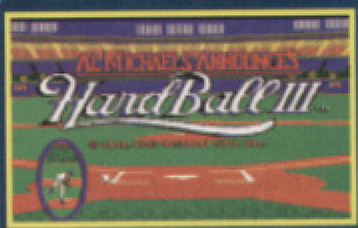
LASTABILITY 69

▲ Willy Beamish offers a massive quest and many different solutions to the entire game, which should keep you coming back...

OVERALL 68

A welcome concept in console games, Willy Beamish is let down by being far too slow (due to disc access) and sluggish to control. The lack of real interaction with the game really lets it down as well.

HardBall III



2 PLAYERS

PRICE	£39.99
BY	ACCOLADE
RELEASE	MAY

OPTIONS

DIFFICULTY SETTINGS: None available.
SOUND TEST: None available.
CONTINUES: Not adjustable.
LIVES: Not adjustable.

1ST DAY SCORE

GET THE SWING OF THINGS!

ORIGIN

The game Baseball. Accolade already have two other Baseball games on the market.

HOW TO CONTROL

A combination of directions on the D-pad and action button dictate the bat's swings and pitcher's pitches.

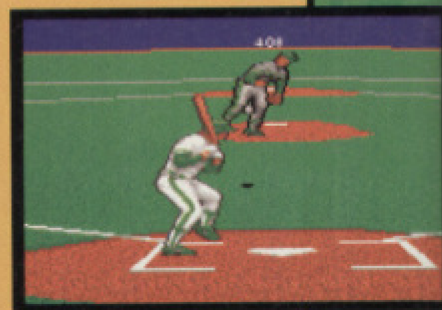
- **A** Has no function.
- **B** Selects items/ pitches the ball/ swings the bat/ throws the ball. All in conjunction with the D-pad.
- **C** Returns to options screen.
- **S** Starts and pauses the game

HOW TO PLAY

Lead your team to victory in either a single 'exhibition' game or a full 'League' tournament.

Most citizens of major cities worldwide are familiar with an object known as the 'Baseball Bat' — mainly thanks to crime. They know how it looks, sounds and are also secure in knowledge of its reliability as a trustworthy burglar-basher! However, for us Brits, the game of Baseball hasn't yet caught on. Thanks to Accolade, though, we now have the third opportunity for the discovery of the Baseball Bat's intended usage — as a sporting tool rather than an offensive weapon!

For the uninitiated, Baseball is a team game where each line-up consists of nine players, and is quite similar to our own beloved PE stalwart — 'Rounders'. The defensive team surround a diamond shaped play area, at each corner of which is a 'base', hence the name 'Baseball'. A batter steps up to the 'home base' representing the offensive team then hits the pitched ball as far as possible and runs attempting to reach as many of the four bases before the ball is either retrieved or caught. Just like cricket, if the ball is caught before touching the ground, the man is out. The player is similarly disgraced if the fielder responsible for a base receives the ball before he gets there. Finally points are scored when a batter successfully makes it to the fourth, home base or manages to run all four bases in one go — a 'Home Run'! Both teams have nine innings each in which to do this as many times as possible. Now, if you ask Tom Cox, Baseball is a game for women — the misguided and somewhat chauvinistic fool. However, with its many Baseball-related features, this cart looks set to disprove his sad claim. Although exactly why Baseball players practise their sport in tights and little hats is anyone's guess!

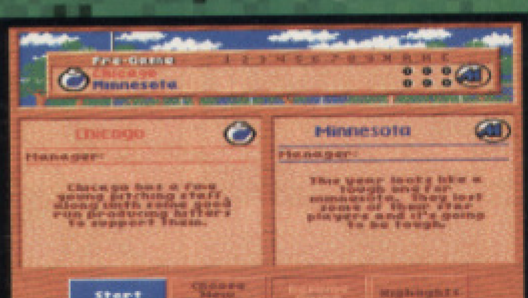


FEVER PITCH

Trying to catch a batter unawares is a nerve racking affair. When faced up to a particularly wise character whose bat seems to attract the ball like a magnet, pitching becomes something of a 'call my bluff' situation! For this reason there are five possible pitching styles available to the pitcher and they all depend on the position of the D-pad, so choose carefully.



▲ Aye up!



▲ Eye, eye?......



▲ Ooyah! My eyeball's fallen out.

LONG TERM REPORT

HOUR
DAY
WEEK
MONTH
YEAR

BREAKDOWN

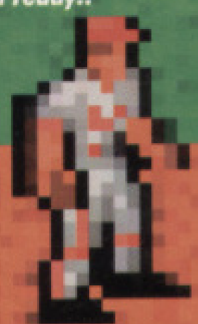
STRATEGY
ACTION
CHALLENGE
REFLEXES

GOING THROUGH CUSTOMS

If there's one thing that Hardball III has in abundance it is the facility for altering almost all aspects of the original cart's set up, right down to the colour of your chosen teams' caps to the logo design upon it. Fascinating.



▲'.....hmmm, I wonder what I'm on for te...'. Hey wait! I wasn't ready!!





BAT MAN

Of all the players on the field no one is more conspicuous than the batter as he steps up to the mound. Once the batter is 'up', as the saying goes, it is he who dictates the distance his fellow team members run. It us the batter's responsibility then to play a similar mind game as the pitcher when taking that crucial swing, thus a further five possible types of swing are afforded to him.

COMMENT



PAUL

When it comes to options Hardball III certainly has them. If you're a Baseball fan who isn't satisfied with just an all out 'play ball' affair, there's everything here you could reasonably expect — perhaps more. However the 'extras' are presented as a bargain basement selection of options! Many of them are fairly uneccessary and displayed in a manner very reminiscent a Boeing 747's flight deck! Also the chosen, close-up view point of the batter and pitcher contrasted with the miniscule fielders is a bit too great for comfort. Control over the batter/pitcher is quite in depth but, once the ball is struck, the viewpoint changes to the limited, miniature fielders who require very little skill to perform a catch. No matter, though, because Hardball III is as good as its chosen method allows. The controls are instinctive and the choice of pitch and batting styles adds an element of strategy to the game. However the long-term interest of this game looks slightly lame when compared to the other sports games for the Megadrive despite its many custom possibilities. Even so this is the best Baseball game on the Megadrive to date.





COMMENT



JAZ

Baseball isn't the most thrilling sport in the world, but this version manages to add enough frills and gimmicks to make playing it fun. The basic gameplay is nicely designed, with lots of different pitches, hits and tactics for those with a real interest in the sport, but it's arcadey enough for non-baseball players to be able to pick it up and enjoy the action without having to read reams of instructions. The big feature of this is the impressive commentary that runs throughout the game. It hasn't got the same amount of phrases as Joe Montana Sportstalk Football, but nevertheless it gives the game an excellent atmosphere. Hardball III is definitely the best baseball game yet seen on console and is highly recommended to fans of the sport.

SPEECH! SPEECH!

So, you don't know of the great Al Michaels then? Well neither do we! No matter because after half an hour or so of playing this game his strangely robotic voice is imprinted on the player's mind forever. Al is the in-game commentator and offers spurious amounts of 'advice' throughout the match. Quite often this advice amounts to merely stating the obvious but it does help to support the cart's big game simulation quality.



PRESENTATION — 87

▲ A satisfactory attract sequence and options galore.
- Many of the options are nothing more than gimmicks and don't actually alter the gameplay at all.

GRAPHICS — 80

▲ Clear representations of the players and a wide choice of varying stadiums for added interest. There are some nice touches to the animation of the players.

SOUND — 79

▲ Okay music coupled with Al Michaels' speech makes the game sound like something special.
▼ Al Michaels really grates on the nerves!

PLAYABILITY — 84

▲ It's fun for one player as the controls are responsive and the tension between pitcher and batter is high.
▼ The rest is pot luck and control of the fielders is quite fiddly.

LASTABILITY — 85

▲ The league matches last a long while. Changing the colour of the various teams' colours is vaguely amusing.
▼ The aforementioned options are largely a waste of time.

OVERALL — 84

A high-quality baseball simulation with far too many needless options. However, in the gameplay stakes, Hardball III is the best console baseball simulation to date. If you're a fan of the sport, check it out.

DOR… ADV…



1 PLAYER

PRICE	£59.99
BY	SEGA
RELEASE	IMPORT

OPTIONS

CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES: INFINITE
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: EXCELLENT
GAME DIFFICULTY: VERY EASY

1ST DAY SCORE

18990 (COMPLETE)

ORIGIN

Doraemon is one of Japan's most popular manga characters. There are books, lunch boxes and toys galore based upon this earless mog.

HOW TO CONTROL

Guide Doraemon left and right by presss-ing these directions on the D-pad. Hold the D-pad down and Doraemon crouches. Keep it pressed and then press the jump button for Doraemon's super jump! He also climbs walls by having him jump at them then pressing up or down.

A Makes Doraemon run faster.

B Jump, jump.

C Acts as the trigger button.

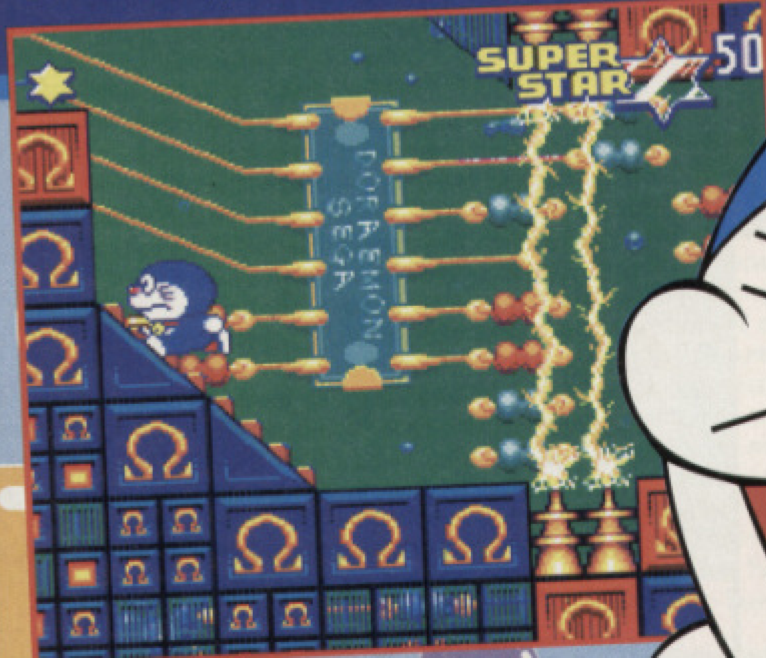
S Starts and pauses the fun on screen.

HOW TO PLAY

Lead Doraemon into his battle against misery over seven levels. Negotiate the many pitfalls and shoot enemies for bonus points and bonus items.

He's already a cult cartoon hero in the Far East but little is known of him over here — Yet! His name is Doraemon, he's a cat and he represents everything that's fun, so it's about time that he let us share in his joyous existence on Sega's hottest console! Nothing, it seems, may cause a frown to blemish Doraemon's radiant features. However the arrival of a red faced, alien wolf-man looks set to do just that as this nasty invader is convincing the world's children that life isn't so great after all. He's sucking all their happy hopes into seven magic globes and placed them in the custody of seven of his most-trusted, but nevertheless evil, minions.

Now it is Doraemon's not-so joyful manga-style mission to bring back the smiles! So this he attempts, across the seven strange and magical worlds that these masters of misery occupy. With his pistol-a-popping and the occasional game of scissor-paper-stone, Doraemon is aiming to bring all the happiness back in time for tea. Though it's only a game for one player, the living-room's the limit for crowding around the TV as Doraemon entertains in his first, platform type adventure for the Megadrive.



▲ Ooer! I've done it now...



COMMENT



RAD

This game really reminds you of what you can do on a Megadrive. The presentation is impeccable and the graphics are absolutely great. The use of colour is very bold and combines with the strong characterisation to produce a very involving atmosphere. This atmosphere makes the game itself much more enjoyable, there's a compulsion to play on just to see what happens to the earless cat next. The levels are full of new ideas and original features and generally there's never a dull moment. Well, for about an hour anyway, after which any player of merit should have completed the game. The problem lies in the amount of extra lives available. Every half a second an easy-to-reach bonus room makes itself known, or Doraemon finds another life star, 1-Up or grabs the requisite number of Super Stars to grant him a lives beanfeast of epic proportions. As a result it's a piece of cake to stroll through the game with nary a care in the world. Whilst Doraemon is a lot of fun while it lasts, and the packaging including the pencil case and school set makes it seem really cool there just isn't enough to keep the majority of gamers occupied for long. Certainly one for younger, less experienced Megadrive owners, but a disappointing waste of a good game for anyone else.





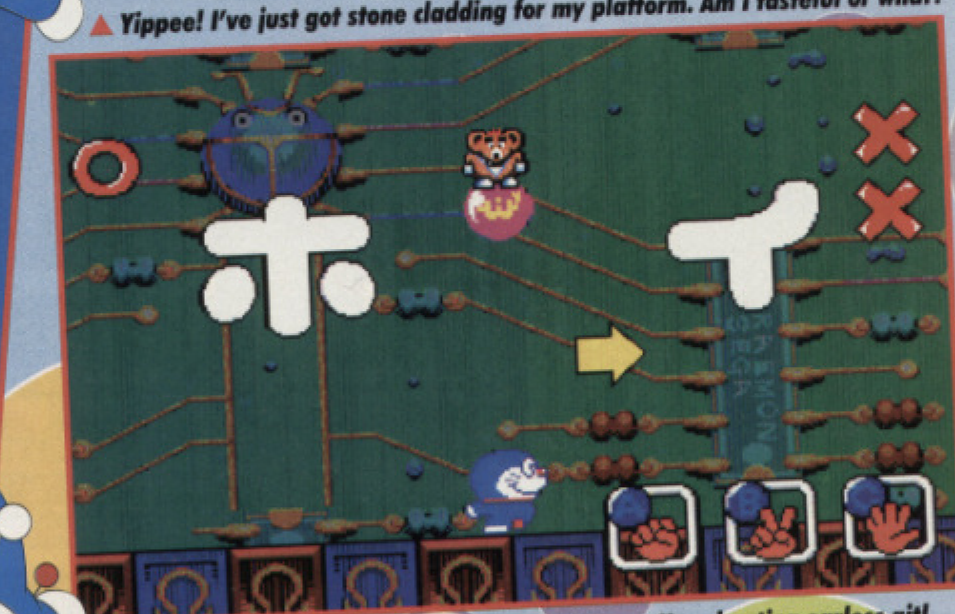
RAEMON VENTURE



Yippee! I've just got stone cladding for my platform. Am I tasteful or what?



So many worlds so little time...



Not fair! You're bound to win, I've only tiny paws. You cheating earless git!



Nnnng. Nnng. Parp!



Hey, I've got a right smart yellow gun, me!

THANKS TO...

Thanks very much to the lads at the 'Video Game Centre' lending us 'Doraemon' and his mightily impressive box-set! For further information their telephone number is: 0202 527314. Also Special thanks to Dave's mate Simon at Thunder and Colt Hot Air Balloons for the 'Jap Cat' picture.



SPECIAL FRIEND

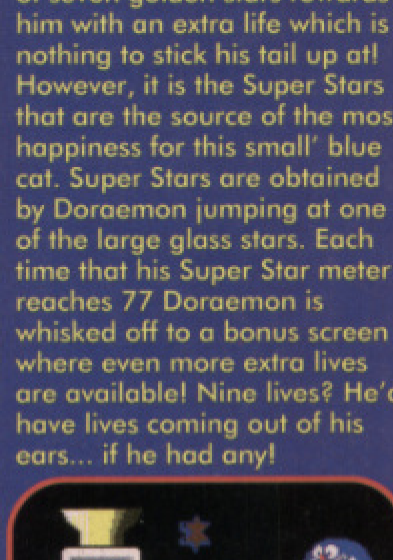
Doraemon's got hundreds of friends but prefers his own company. This is on the grounds that he knows a mega star when he sees one, and see one he does each morning in the bathroom mirror! Whenever Doraemon collects a rag doll he has the pleasure of another Doraemon's company for a limited time period. This means double the fun of twice the enemy annihilating excitement!



Okay Key! Don't try anything cute, we got you covered!

DORAEMON, SUPER STAR

His happy blueness is something of a superstar so it is only fitting that the collection of stars concerns him the most at times of trouble. The collection of seven golden stars rewards him with an extra life which is nothing to stick his tail up at! However, it is the Super Stars that are the source of the most happiness for this small' blue cat. Super Stars are obtained by Doraemon jumping at one of the large glass stars. Each time that his Super Star meter reaches 77 Doraemon is whisked off to a bonus screen where even more extra lives are available! Nine lives? He'd have lives coming out of his ears... if he had any!



KELSALL KORNER

It's not often that Dave Kelsall provides us with something of interest but this is one of those rare occasions. Before he worked here Dave designed hot-air balloons, one of which portrayed Doraemon the cat! "No one knew who he was at the time, so we just called it Jap Cat", informs the man to whom the term imagination means nothing whatsoever!



LONG TERM REPORT

HOUR
DAY
WEEK
MONTH
YEAR

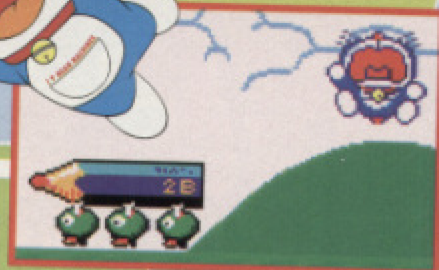
BREAKDOWN

STRATEGY
ACTION
CHALLENGE
REFLEXES

BOX CAT

Doraemon's adventure comes packaged in a huge box set which explains the rather high asking price of sixty sponds. For the extra twenty quid you get a Doraemon pencil case with three pencils and a rubber!





▲ They stole my pencil!!!



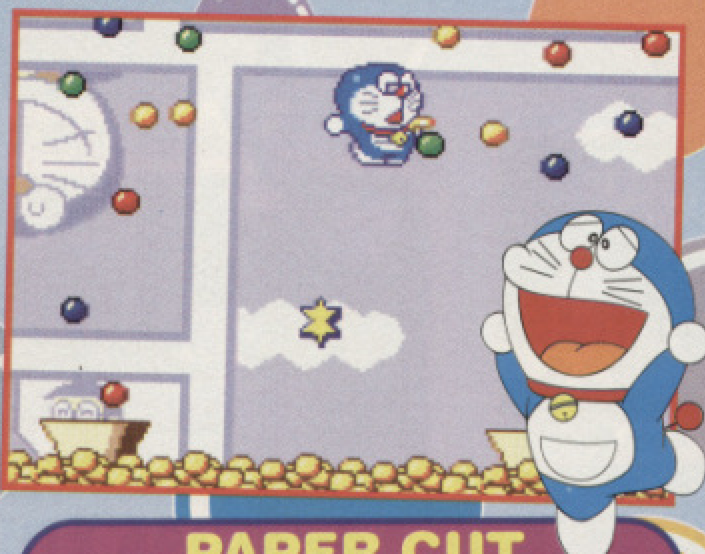
▲ Well I think one of us should have won. At Least we've got ears!

COMMENT



PAUL

It's great to see the Megadrive welcome Doraemon on board as he is such a versatile little animal. I've seen his image on many Japanese products performing an assortment of visual gags and so the scope for this video game is enormous! Sega have used the license well and this earless cat turns the Megadrive into his very own playground — as soon as the machine is powered up Doraemon appears beneath the Sega logo and cheekily drawls the word 'Saay gaah'. This stands as a good indication of what is to come, which is a very playable and often amusing, small but perfectly formed cart stocked with variety. The screen-shots themselves illustrate to anyone who is familiar with Doraemon that the graphics represent him down to a tee and he's animated perfectly too. Though there are seven stages they are only one screen long and, once that all of Doraemon's moves are mastered, very obvious in layout. The bonus rooms are practically laid on a saucer for his exploration and milking the surprises behind them for all they're worth — another stack of 1-Ups no less — is easy too, even for a cakka gibbon! What this amounts to is the player stocking up with about fifty extra chances, not to mention the continues, and the absolute certainty of completing the game within a couple of hours! It's a great little game but hardly the cat's whiskers.



PAPER CUT

Of the many possible and terrible things that Doraemon expects from Wolf-man's assistants a game of scissor-paper-stone isn't one of them! Yet this most harmless of olden school-yard pastimes is resurrected for the battles to free portions of the world's happiness!

▼ Anyone seen a levitating purple lion?



PRESENTATION 91

▲ Amusing snippets of Doraemon feature at the front end and between levels. There is a comprehensive options screen.
▼ Unfortunately it's all in Japanese and, therefore, gibberish to most of us.

GRAPHICS 88

▲ Large sprites move smoothly against bold, impressive backdrops. Doraemon is a real star.
▼ The enemy sprites don't vary much. There are too many chickens for our liking!

SOUND 83

▲ Joyful tunes and lots of cutesy Doraemon speech!
▼ The music is very samey.

PLAYABILITY 90

▲ Excellent fun due to Doraemon's lively personality. There is a hilarious variation on 'musical chairs' at the end of the game.

LASTABILITY 57

▲ It's always a laugh.
▼ The game takes only a couple of hours to play through as it is very easy indeed.

OVERALL 72

A very enjoyable, beautifully presented little cart that is too short lived because of easy gameplay and a plentiful supply of extra lives.

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NO ALTERED BEAST OR SONIC 1

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Joe Montana Football	Around Palmer Golf	Musha	World Cup
John Maddens Football	Arrow Flash	Rastan Saga II	Arch Rivals
Mystic Defender	Atomic Robo Kid	Revenge Shinobi	Decap Attack
Pat Riley Basketball	Buster Douglas Boxing	Shadow of the Beast	Dick Tracy
Populous	Centurion E. Swat	Space Harrier II	Mario Lemiux Ice Hockey
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Super Hyolide	Final Zone	Strider	Star Control
Thunderforce II	Fire Shark	Super Hang On	

GROUP B

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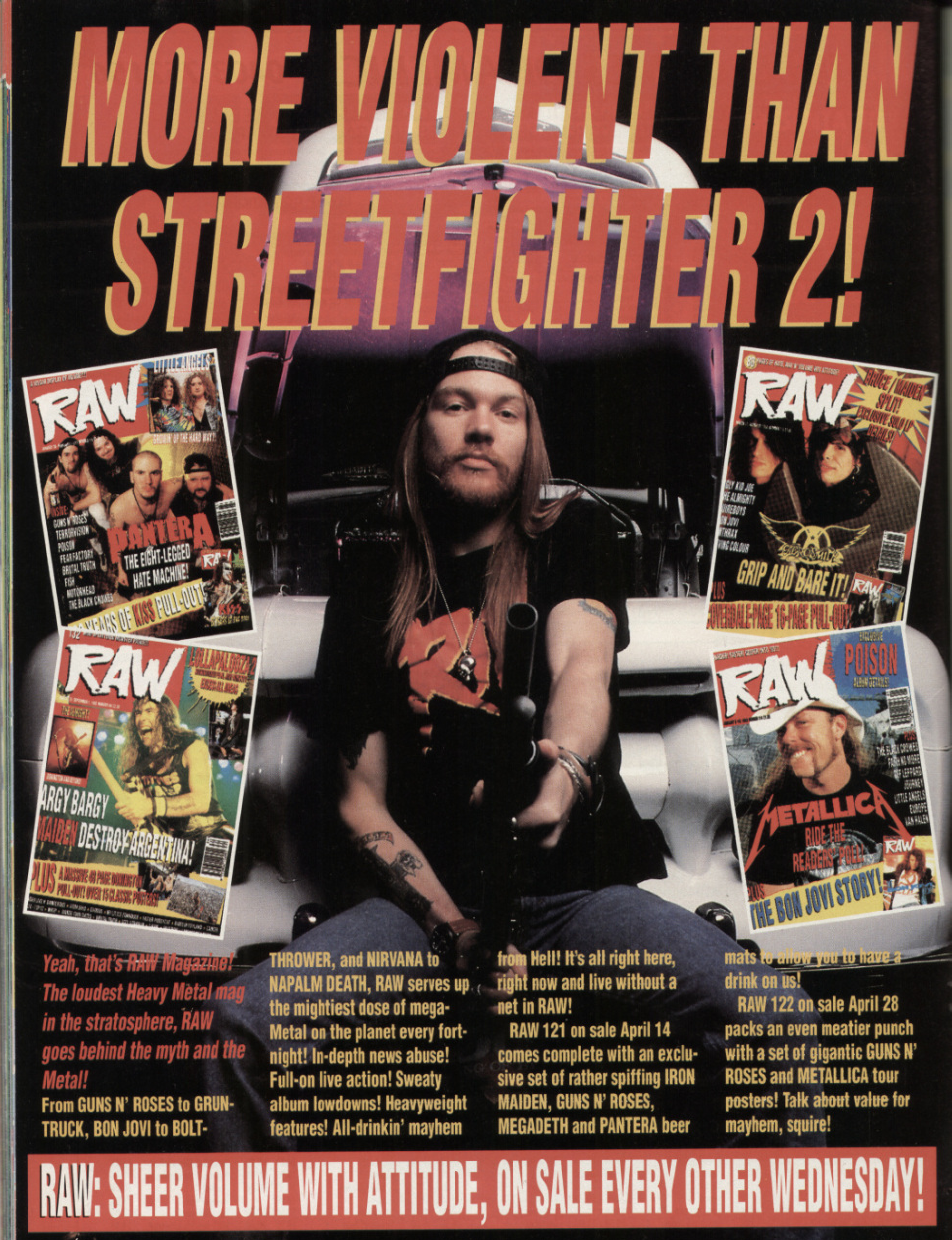
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LOOKBACK



Press the temporal differential analyser. Switch the matter disruptor generator to MAX. And take a trip back in time with Jaz 'n' Rich to May 1991 and see what we were reviewing then, and how those games would cope with today's rigorous testing...



STEP BACK IN

The cover! MEAN MACHINES revealed the amazing Sonic the Hedgehog to an astonished world! This cover gave us the acclaimed Cover Illustration of the Year at the 1991 EMAP Editorial Awards.
Street Fighter II arrived in the arcades and Jaz went on about it at great length in the editorial.
We announced that Virgin was bringing Terminator out for the Megadrive, Master System and Game Gear... and we were right.
Afterburner II was officially released, much to the joy of Rich (it remains a favourite of his to this day!).
The Master System version of Galaxy Force was reviewed by us in our Classic Review section.
Domark's Master System Prince of Persia game was exclusively revealed in our news section.



▲ *"Look it's only a game, right! I lock you up in this tower and someone rescues you! Ok?"*

JAMES POND

MACHINE: MEGADRIVE
BY: EA

Guide Pond through the scrolling levels, saving the world from the environmentally unfriendly Dr Maybe.



BY: EA
PRICE: £39.99
RELEASE DATE: OUT NOW
GAME DIFFICULTY: EASY
LIVES: 3
CONTINUES: 2
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: GOOD
1 PLAYERS

PRESENTATION 79%
The game starts with a movie-opening, which is nice, if not exciting.

GRAPHICS 79%
The sprites are very nice, but unfortunately the backgrounds are dull.

SOUND 73%
Again this is nothing to write home about, but is inoffensive and suits the game well.

PLAYABILITY 85%
Great fun and easy to get into, the straightforward action of James Pond is instantly enjoyable.

LASTABILITY 71%
Twelve missions confront James, but once they're beaten you won't be coming back for more.

OVERALL 79%
This is different, unusual and amusing, but ultimately lacks the depth (ho ho) to make it to the big time.

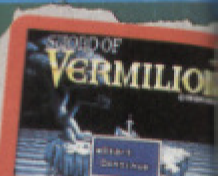
WHAT WE SAID THEN

JAZ: James Pond provides plenty of fun when you first start playing, but unfortunately it doesn't hold its appeal over a long period of time.
MATT: It's certainly fun to play and the main sprite is cleverly animated.



WHAT WE SAY NOW

JAZ: High quality Megadrive platform games are very common these days, and this early example looks very dated. 15% off all the marks should do the trick.
RICH: Very nice to look at, but quite dull to play by today's standards. Knock off 10% and I'll be happy.



BY: SEGA
PRICE: £49.9
RELEASE DATE: OUT NOW
GAME DIFFICULTY: TRICKY
LIVES: N/A
CONTINUES: INFINITE
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: GOOD
1 PLAYERS

PRESENTATION 94%
Incredible intro screens combine with the wonderful music to great effect.

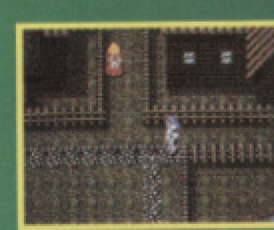
GRAPHICS 86%
The main baddies are brilliant, and the standard of graphics is high throughout.

SOUND 93%
The music is some of the best heard on the Megadrive. Prepare to be amazed!

PLAYABILITY 82%
Building up enough cash for the next purchase can be a little dull, but otherwise it's strong in this category.

LASTABILITY 80%
For the price this has to be a huge game; and it is. There's months of gaming here (as long as you don't use the hint book).

OVERALL 82%
A great game - by far the best RPG on the Megadrive - but it sports a very hefty price tag. Think carefully before spending the £50.00.





AFTERBURNER

MACHINE: MEGADRIVE
BY: EA

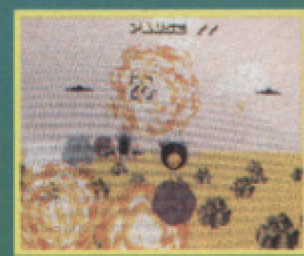
Fly through the 3D landscape, blasting planes in a frenzy of arcade action.

WHAT WE SAID THEN

JAZ: The graphics are awesome, with rapid, convincing 3D update — the planes come towards you at incredible speed.
MATT: The gameplay is repetitive , but the high-speed thrills 'n' spills offered by the game more than make up for it.

WHAT WE SAY NOW

JAZ: Repetitive it may be, but this is very fast, highly challenging and great fun. It's still brill after all these years and makes even new games like G-Loc and Afterburner III look very cack indeed. I wouldn't change the marks at all.
RICH: Well, call me very old fashioned, but I still play this game and it is still utterly awesome. In fact, a couple of months ago, my mate showed it to one of the UK's top programmers (who hadn't seen it before) and he was amazed! If you're after a decent shooter I highly recommend this fab game.







BY: SEGA
PRICE: £34.99
RELEASE DATE: OUT NOW
GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM
LIVES: 3
CONTINUES: 3
SKILL LEVELS: 3
RESPONSIVENESS: WHIZZZ
1 PLAYERS

PRESENTATION 86%
Loads of options to wade through and an arcade-perfect attract sequence.

GRAPHICS 92%
Superlative 3D sprites whizz around the screen at top speed!

SOUND 93%
Hard and heavy rock soundtracks the like of which have not been heard on the Megadrive. Excellent explosive effects too.

PLAYABILITY 94%
A super-responsive F-14 makes this more enjoyable to play than the coin-op!

LASTABILITY 88%
Twenty-one levels of airborne destruction that'll have you playing again and again!

OVERALL 90%
Airborne excitement which has yet to be successfully replicated on any other console. Go for it!



SWORD OF VERMILLION

MACHINE: MEGADRIVE
BY: SEGA

Plenty of RPG action as you strut around a scrolling landscape beating up meanies and saving the kingdom from impending doom (or something).

WHAT WE SAID THEN

JAZ: I don't like RPGs much; there's too much brainwork involved for my liking.
MATT: Sword of Vermillion is easily the best RPG yet released on the Megadrive; its graphics are excellent and the playability is of a high standard.

WHAT WE SAY NOW

JAZ: Some things don't change, like the fact that I still don't like RPGs and they still make my brain hurt. But other things do, like the marks being 20% less that we gave them then right across the board.
RICH: (Yawn!). Umm? Sorry, but Sword of Vermillion looks very dull and dated nowadays, compared to the likes of Shining Force and Landstalker. Take those marks down to the low 70s.

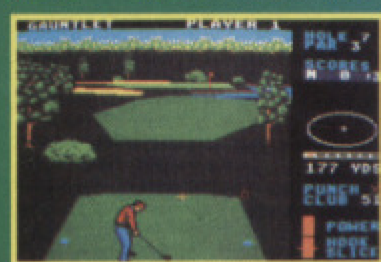
WORLD CLASS LEADERBOARD

MACHINE: MASTER SYSTEM
BY: EA

Quite simply the greatest golfing simulation on the Master System, World Class Leaderboard offers skill graphics, ace playability and bags of lastability.

WHAT WE SAID THEN

JAZ: World Class Leaderboard is a superb golf game — one of the best you're likely to play.



MATT: Although the graphics are quite slow, all of the skill, timing and atmosphere of real golf has been successfully captured.

WHAT WE SAY NOW

JAZ: It's still the best golf game on Master System and the marks shouldn't change. It's as simple as that.
RICH: We were all on a golfing high after playing PGA Tour Golf that month, but I still think that this is as good as you're going to get on the Master System. The marks are just fine.



BY: US GOLD
PRICE: £29.99
RELEASE DATE: JUNE
GAME DIFFICULTY: TRICKY
LIVES: N/A
CONTINUES: N/A
SKILL LEVELS: 3
RESPONSIVENESS: TEE-RIFFIC
1-2 PLAYERS

PRESENTATION 79%
Rather bland opening screens, but the game itself has loads of options to tinker with.

GRAPHICS 92%
The 3D screen is a bit slow to build up, but the results are well worth it.

SOUND 94%
Generous lashings of sampled speech and brilliant effects. An above average tune is thrown in for good measure.

PLAYABILITY 93%
Simple to get into and addictive from the outset.

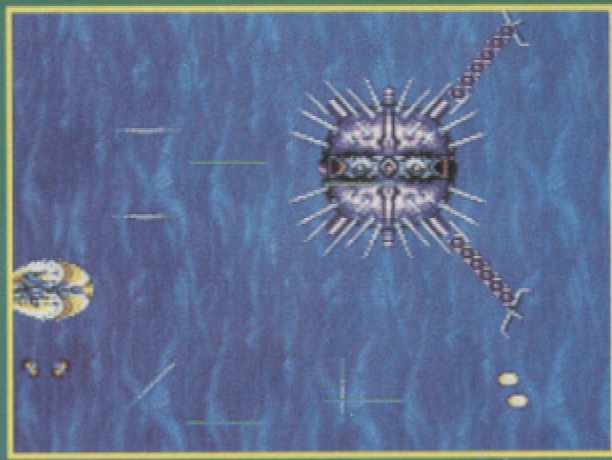
LASTABILITY 92%
Four sprawling courses and a four-player option give this loads of lasting appeal.

OVERALL 92%
The best Sega golfing game by far, and one to snap up as soon as possible!

DARIUS II

MACHINE: MEGADRIVE
BY: TAITO

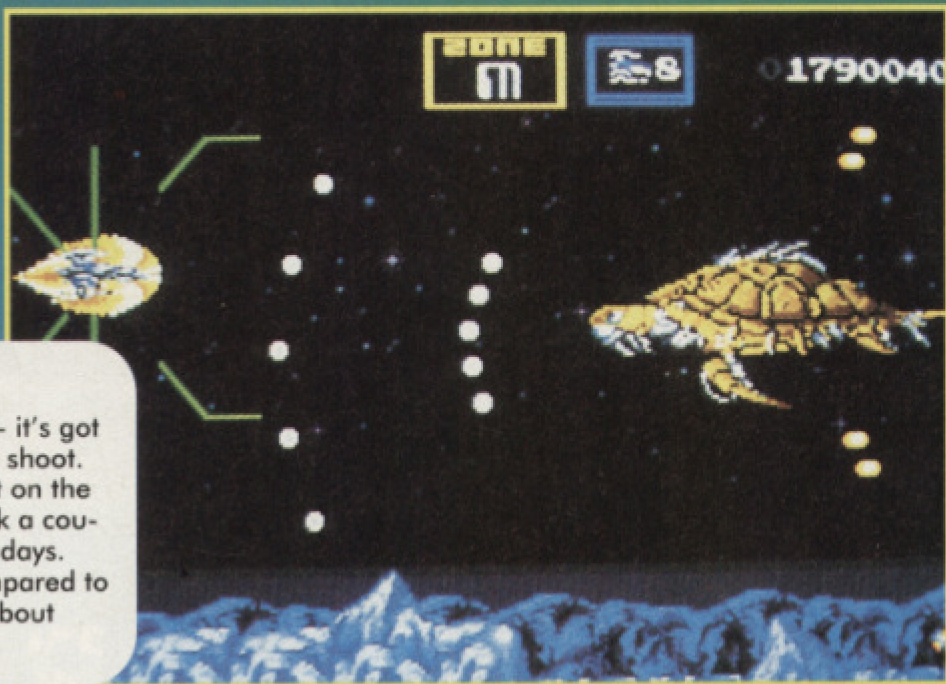
Well slap o' my thigh, if it isn't a horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up with big bosses and power-up weaponry.



WHAT WE SAID THEN

JAZ: IF you're after a slick and playable blaster which won't lose its appeal overnight, have a crack at this.
MATT: With a massive 26 levels to wade through and all of the different endings, it'll be a long time before you get bored with this game.





WHAT WE SAY NOW

JAZ: Actually, I still quite like this - it's got five different endings and loads to shoot. Even though the graphics are a bit on the dated side, I'd only probably knock a couple of percent off the marks these days.
RICH: This looks rather dated compared to the likes of Bio-Hazard. Take off about 10% from each rating.

BY: SEGA
PRICE: £29.99
RELEASE DATE: OUT NOW
GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM
LIVES: 1
CONTINUES: UNLIMITED
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: COSMIC
1 PLAYERS

PRESENTATION 79%
A boring attract screen, but there's decent animated intros for each level.
GRAPHICS 92%
Excellent, super-speedy 3D sprites and backgrounds.
SOUND 51%
Boring crash-bang effect and laughable music.
PLAYABILITY 93%
Loads of thrills and spills on offer as you trash the Fourth Empire.
LASTABILITY 79%
Only four worlds, but they're quite challenging.
OVERALL 85%
Put simply, Galaxy Force is the finest 3D shoot 'em up on the Sega and should be checked out immediately.

GALAXY FORCE

MACHINE: MASTER SYSTEM
BY: SEGA

Shoot through the 3D levels, blasting everything that moves... and why not?

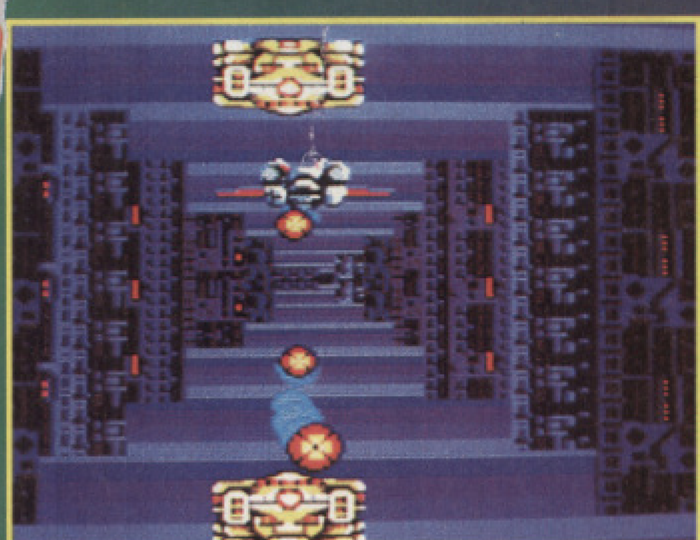
BY: TAITO
PRICE: £37.00
RELEASE DATE: IMPORT
GAME DIFFICULTY: EASY
LIVES: 3
CONTINUES: 3
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: GREAT
1 PLAYERS

PRESENTATION 69%
Plenty of options, but the attract sequences are very underwhelming.
GRAPHICS 77%
Small, but detailed sprites with pretty decent scrolling backdrops.
SOUND 81%
Forgettable tunes are overshadowed by the raucous blasting effects.
PLAYABILITY 89%
Easy to get into from the outset, with instantly addictive arcade action.
LASTABILITY 84%
Loads of endings and 26 levels combine to produce a long-lasting game.
OVERALL 83%
An excellent shoot 'em up with plenty of lasting appeal - check it out if you haven't already had your fill of blasting games.

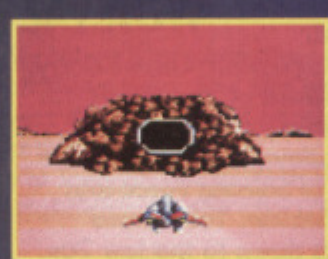
WHAT WE SAID THEN

JAZ: Although the original coin-op was no great shakes (all graphics and no game), Galaxy Force has translated to the Sega well.

MATT: I thought the coin-op was about as entertaining as an episode of Neighbours, but I was pleasantly surprised by the quality of this Master System conversion.

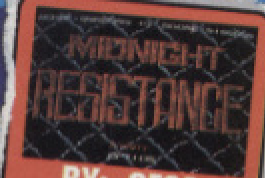






WHAT WE SAY NOW

JAZ: This is top stuff which is miles better than much of the cack that gets shoved out these days. The marks are perfect — go out and get it before it's gone forever.
RICH: This is still one of the best blasters Master System owners can get their hands on. I think it would receive much the same mark nowadays, give or take a couple of percent.



BY: SEGA
PRICE: £37.00
RELEASE DATE: IMPORT
GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM
LIVES: 3-5
CONTINUES: 1-5
SKILL LEVELS: 4
RESPONSIVENESS: FAB

1 PLAYERS

PRESENTATION 88%
Nice intro screens and loads of options to fiddle about with.

GRAPHICS 82%
A bit rough in places, but mostly good.

SOUND 93%
Fabulous, pulse-racing soundtracks accompany the action perfectly!

PLAYABILITY 87%
The blasting action is addictive from the word go...

LASTABILITY 83%
...with four skill levels and nine levels to wade through!

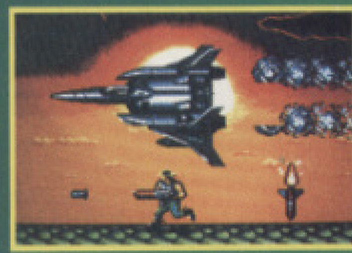
OVERALL 84%
A decent blaster and an excellent conversion. Shoot 'em up fans should have a look.

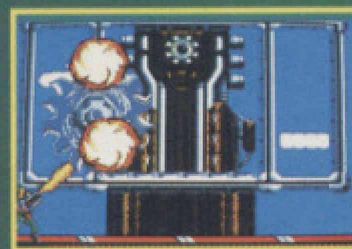
MIDNIGHT RESISTANCE

MACHINE: MEGADRIVE

BY: DATA EAST

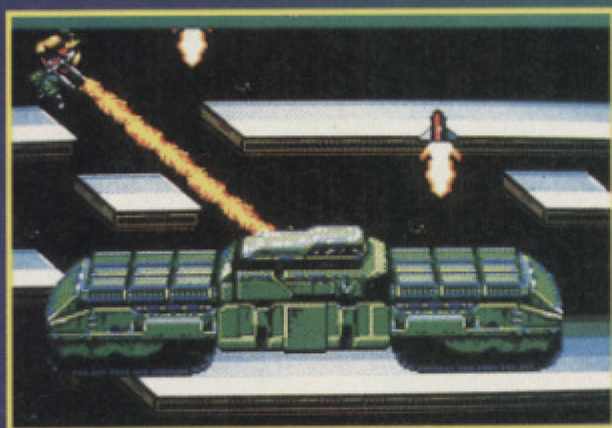
Blast your way through the scrolling landscapes, collecting power-up weapons and shooting bosses... original it isn't.





WHAT WE SAID THEN

JAZ: If you're a shoot 'em up fan who's after a blasting game featuring something other than spaceships, Midnight Resistance is highly recommended.
MATT: It's certainly fun to play and the main sprite is cleverly animated.



WHAT WE SAY NOW

JAZ: This is fun - but what a pushover. It's not at all challenging and can be finished in hours on EASY level. Playability 78%, lastability 68% and overall 72%. The rest of the marks are fine.
RICH: Ruined by the ridiculously easy EASY setting, Midnight Resistance is only just average by today's standards. It's still a pretty good blaster, but some of the newer games offer better blasting at the same price. Deduct 15% from those ratings.

JOE MONTANA FOOTBALL

MACHINE: MASTER SYSTEM

BY: EA

Joe Montana Football is best described as a sideways-scrolling American Football sim — the usual amount of plays, violence and touchdowns.



BY: SEGA
PRICE: £29.99
RELEASE DATE: OUT NOW
GAME DIFFICULTY: EASY
LIVES: N/A
CONTINUES: N/A
SKILL LEVELS: 3
RESPONSIVENESS: GOOD

1-2 PLAYERS

PRESENTATION 77%
Liberal lashings of Joe Montana attract screens to wade through.

GRAPHICS 64%
Small sprites and a boring horizontally scrolling pitch.

SOUND 69%
Bland sound during the game.

PLAYABILITY 66%
Control is very responsive and the tactic screens are easy to understand.

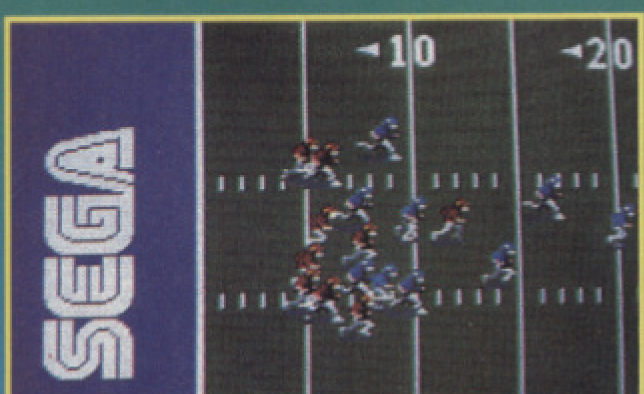
LASTABILITY 68%
28 teams and a two-player mode mean that this has quite a lot in store if you can keep playing.

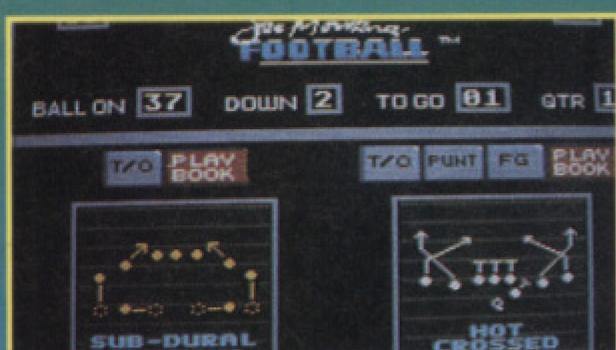
OVERALL 65%
Not exactly an exciting sports sim, and overshadowed by the older, but far superior American Pro Football.

WHAT WE SAID THEN

JAZ: The graphics and sound are average And although there are plenty of plays to choose from, the game simply isn't exciting or challenging.

MATT: Joe Montana Football isn't at all exciting to play and the action can hardly be termed as addictive.



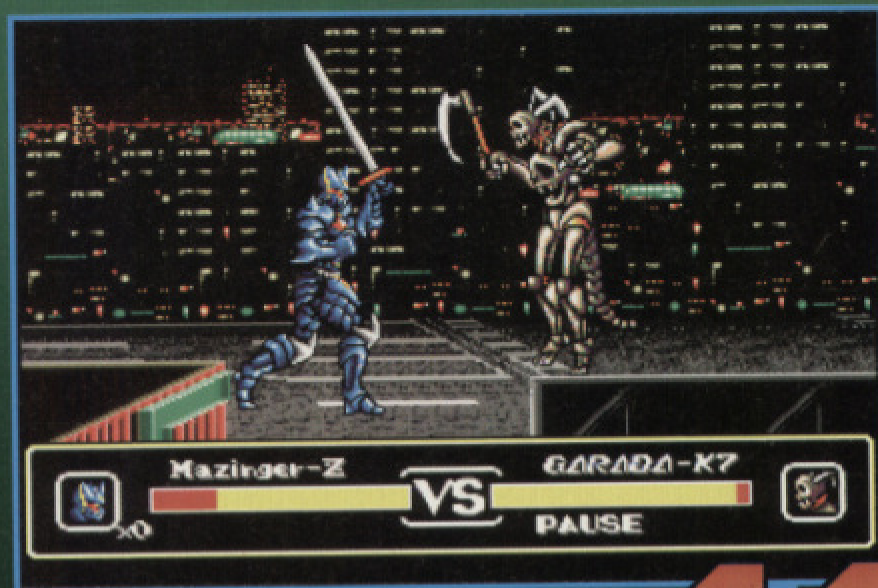


WHAT WE SAY NOW

JAZ: Zzzzzz. Buy American Pro Football.
RICH: Boredom Central. Joe Montana was only just average in its day and these days its a particularly bad example. As we said then, American Pro Football on the Master System is tons better.



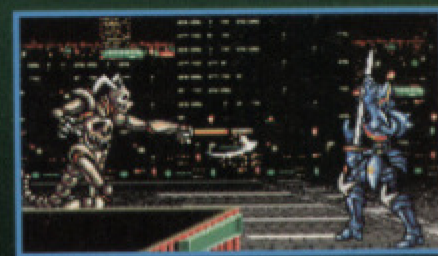
PREVIEWS



▲ You won't be laughing when you've tasted my rusty cutlass, scytheman!



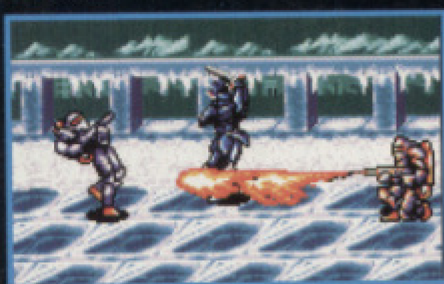
▲Ah! You grazed my ankle!



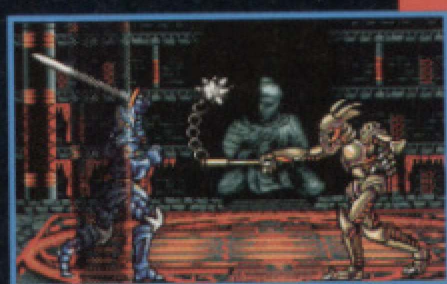
MAZIN



▲ Swish!



▲ Roast!



▲ Lunge!

These are fragile lives that we lead. One minute we are striving to the summits of earthly ambition, and the next we are all being slaughtered by aliens! In Mazin Saga such a scenario becomes reality. The year is 1999, and the Earthlings that managed to survive the alien holocaust now live a constant nightmare underground trying to escape the malevolent force of their captors.

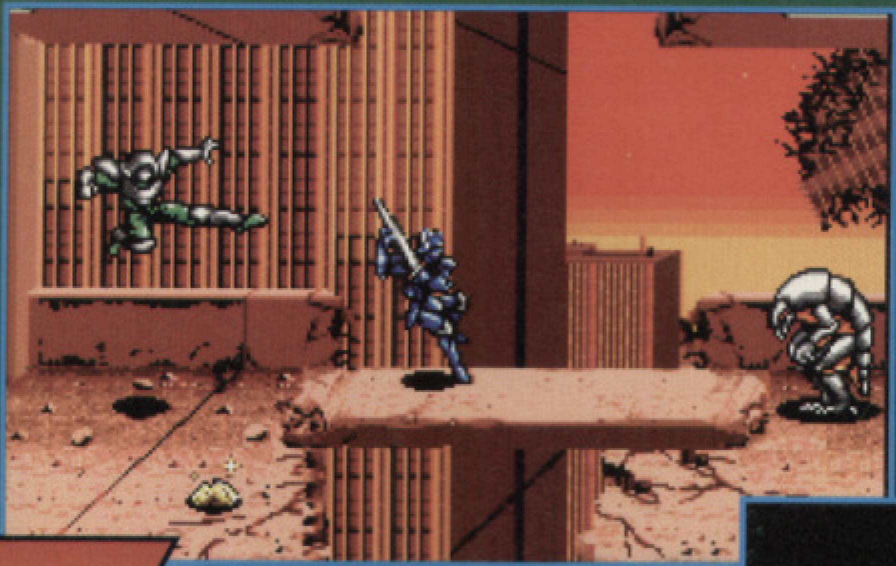
Now as you would expect, all is not lost. Thanks to your average cranky scientist, human kind can place its hopes of freedom on a combat robot called Mazinger-Z. Possessing sword skills that Zoro would die for, Mazi makes his way across a platform wasteland tackling mutants a-plenty, and going one on one with gigantic bosses. His makers have fitted him out with a maniac style special attack, although the power of it drains some of his life force.

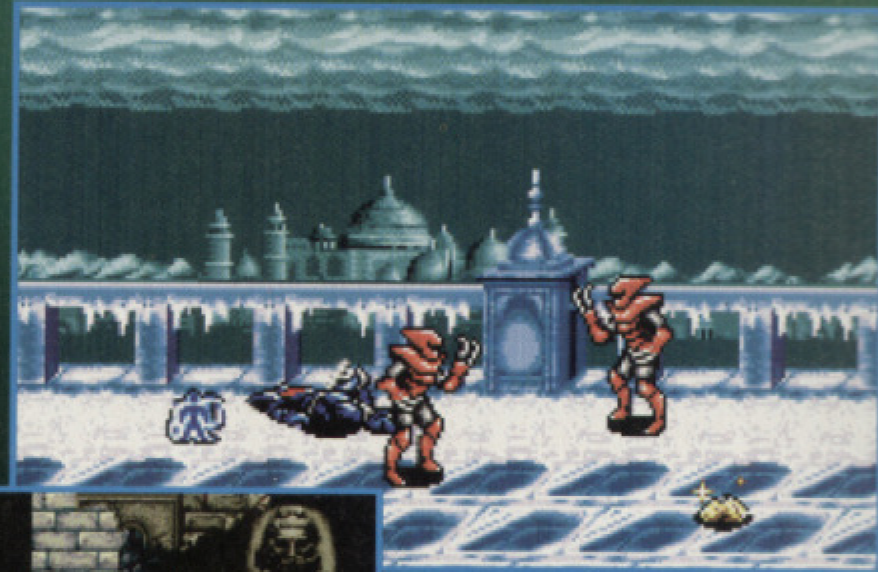
Mazin Saga looks very much like a run-of-the-mill beat em' up. We've seen nothing so far that makes this look particularly exceptional, apart from the groovy end-of-level sprites which take up most of the screen, but Mazin Saga will get the full MEAN MACHINES dissection





BY	SEGA
RELEASE	TBA
PRICE	TBA
PLAYERS	1





▲ Watch out for the golden poo.

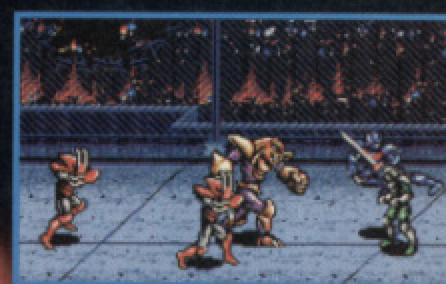
SAGA



▲ Seems to be a shrine of some sort...but no collection box?

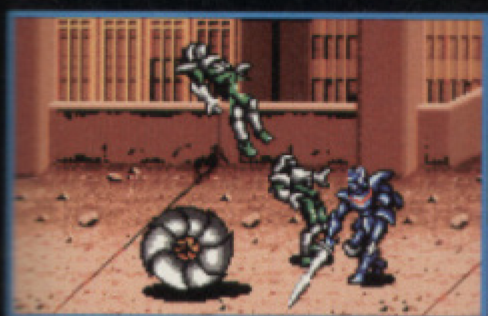


▲ Gentle Buddha say — kill them all!



▲ Enjoyable combat action, hurrah!





▲ Seize them, Meringue men!



▲ This first thing I noticed was a strong smell of Parmesan...



B.O.B

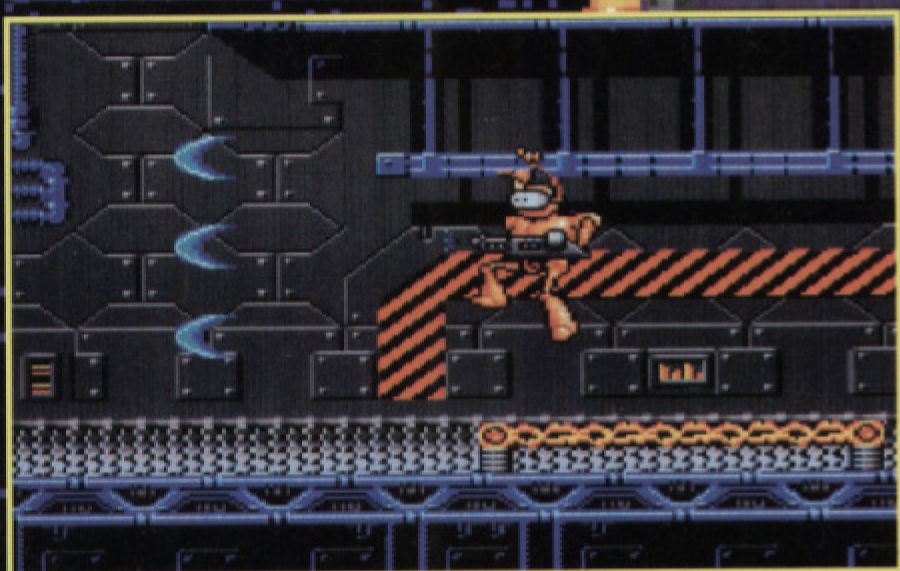
Until now the most we expected from an Electronic Arts' platform game were tired old computer conversions! However all this is set to change for the better as EA have invented a versatile, robotic character named BOB; although it appears that BOB's inventor has forgotten to build some common sense into the lad! As it happens BOB is introduced to us in a real heap of trouble, rubble and spare parts! You see the hapless, reckless 'bot is recovering from a rather nasty accident. After borrowing his senior robot's car in the hope of impressing his female counterpart (Robots have neither Fathers nor girlfriends as such, you see) BOB trashes it against a meteor! To make matters worse this particular meteor is one of three alien space colonies, and the governers are none to pleased about the crater BOB has accidentally placed in their midst! In his bid for escape BOB now finds himself pitting his synthetic wits against hordes of aliens who are after his oil! Early impressions of the cart look favourable and, as always, we promise to give you the full details within next month's exciting pages.



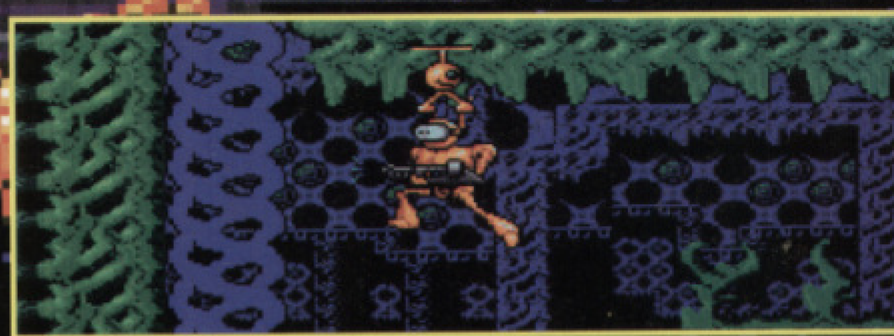
▲ See this gun? I'm gonna shoot you.



▲ Been hitting the Baby Bio again, have we?



▲ Triple lucky horseshoes of doom attack weapon!

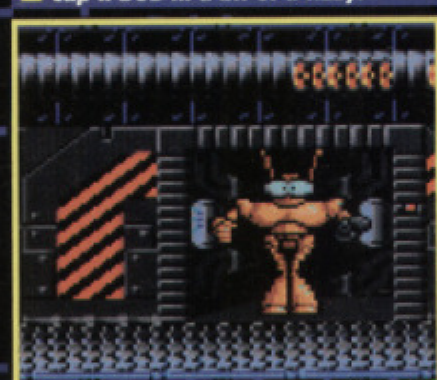


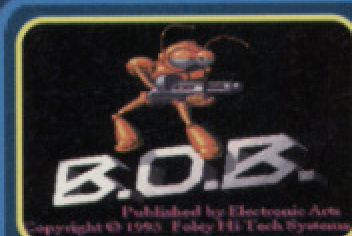
▲ Once upon a time there was a little helicopter called Bob ©HRH Fergie.



▲ Cap'n BOB in a bit of a tizzy.





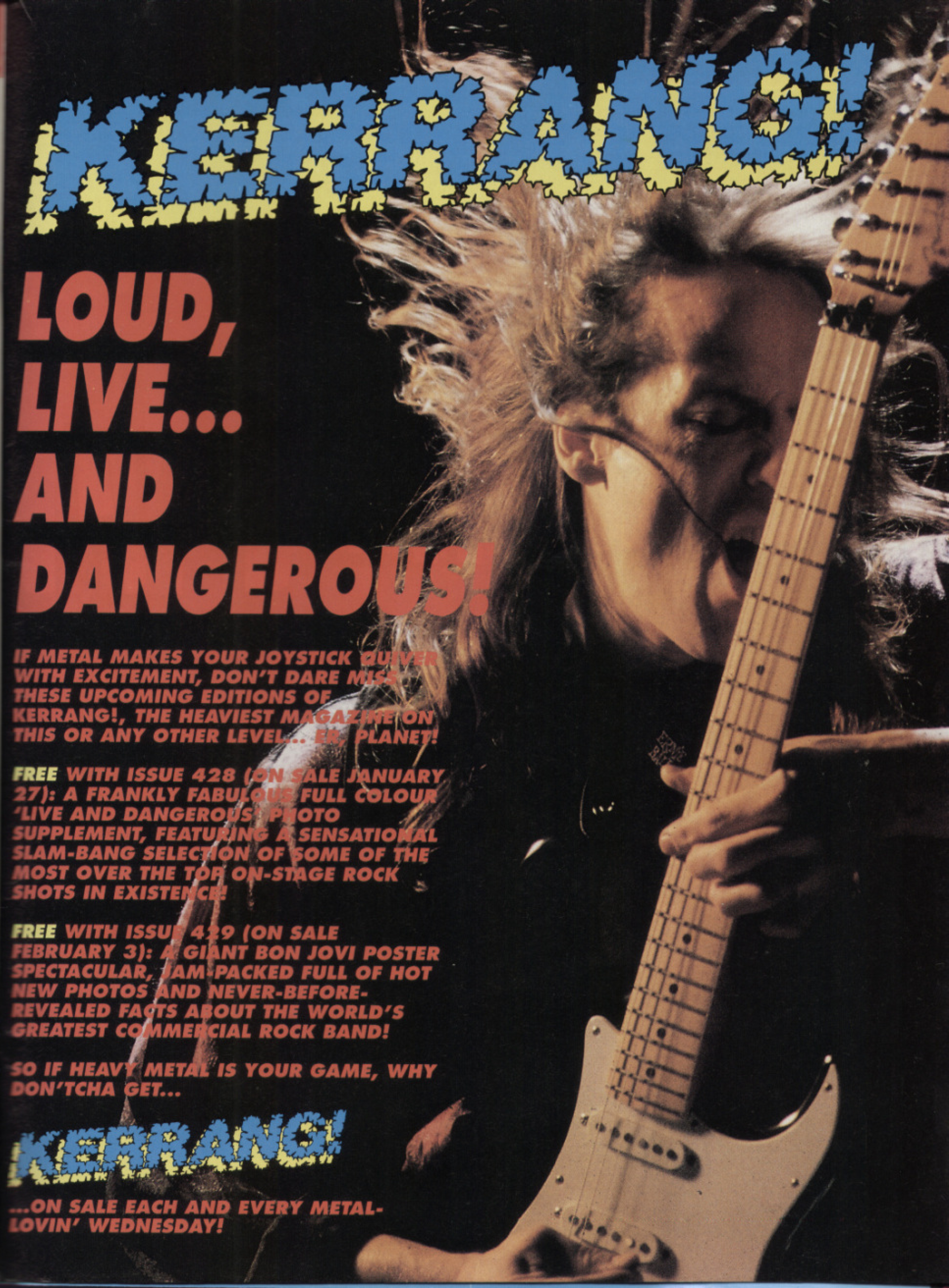


BY: EA

RELEASE: JULY

PRICE: £39.99

1 PLAYER


KERRANG!
LOUD, LIVE... AND DANGEROUS!
IF METAL MAKES YOUR JOYSTICK QUIVER WITH EXCITEMENT, DON'T DARE MISS THESE UPCOMING EDITIONS OF KERRANG!, THE HEAVIEST MAGAZINE ON THIS OR ANY OTHER LEVEL... ER, PLANET!
FREE WITH ISSUE 428 (ON SALE JANUARY 27): A FRANKLY FABULOUS FULL COLOUR 'LIVE AND DANGEROUS' PHOTO SUPPLEMENT, FEATURING A SENSATIONAL SLAM-BANG SELECTION OF SOME OF THE MOST OVER THE TOP ON-STAGE ROCK SHOTS IN EXISTENCE!
FREE WITH ISSUE 429 (ON SALE FEBRUARY 3): A GIANT BON JOVI POSTER SPECTACULAR, JAM-PACKED FULL OF HOT NEW PHOTOS AND NEVER-BEFORE-REVEALED FACTS ABOUT THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMMERCIAL ROCK BAND!
SO IF HEAVY METAL IS YOUR GAME, WHY DON'TCHA GET...
KERRANG!
...ON SALE EACH AND EVERY METAL-LOVIN' WEDNESDAY!

THE FLI

Scientific theorists proved, under the legendary influence of Charles Darwin, that man was not the predestined incarnation of God as the Christians would have us believe, but a species that had been developing for millions of years. By digging up ancient bones and committing themselves to painstaking research, these scientists discovered man's Neandertol ancestors. But as they bitterly discovered, the only thing they need have done to affirm their beliefs was watch a few episodes of The Flintstones!

Now Megadrive owners have the precious opportunity to experience a little of man's evolutionary festival by plugging in Sega's Stone Age platform romp. This Megadrive version of the very popular cartoon shares some of the same characteristics as the NES version. Fred is assigned tasks by his chums, and then clubs his way across land and under water. His chunky arms ensure his climbing abilities are up to scratch, while the cuddly alien, Gazoo, pops up and helps the neckless caveman on occasions.

From initial sampling, The Flintstones doesn't look like an exceptionally original affair, but the action is fun and all of the Flintstones cast is faithfully reproduced. Check out the review next month when we'll be going at it with our favourite reviewing chisels!







It's a purple dragon, readers. That's what it is.



Oh so that's what it is, is it?! Why didn't you tell me before?! Wil-maaaaah!



▼ JHJSZNBJ N CVGKNXNZkKNMKLNMKN N, fgh gh fg fg fgh gf





NTSTONES







▲ Luckily the shark came to the rescue and dislodged Fred's monster winnets for him!

▼ 'Fred, the machinists are complaining that they're simply not being paid enough!'







BY	SEGA
RELEASE	JUNE
1 PLAYER	PRICE TBA

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☆ MEGA

FOR SALE

LOADS OF ADD-ONS for various consoles, including Megadrive, Game Gear, etc for more info, call Mark on (0642) 226708.

SNES with 2 controls, Action Replay, Axelay, Mickeys Quest, Super Tennis, Phalanx, Death Valley Ralley, Ramna 2.5, Street Fighter 2 £300. Tel. Dave on (0638) 660873.

FOR SALE Amiga 500, 1 meg with mouse and joystick, also £280 worth of games sell for £350. Call (0702) 207476.

NES, 5 games, 2 controllers, robot, light gun, zapper, joystick, quick sale £100. Ring (0942) 725224, ask for Andrew, great bargain.

SNES GAMES (USA) for sale, include Super Off Road, Chuck Rock, Turtles IV, Spiderman and X-Men, Super Wrestlemania, Addams Family. Buyer must collect, all boxed £20-£30. Tel. 081-994 5830, ask for Paul. (London area).

SEGA GAME GEAR for sale, 4 great games and master gear, also psu, worth £220 sell for £150. Tel. (0780) 783651.

C64 FOR SALE, 43 games and cartridge, joystick, light gun, tape deck and manual £80, ask for Richard on (0274) 833798, and GG master gear convertor with Sonic for MS Mickey Mouse for GG and 2 cases, sell the lot £50.

PC ENGINE GT for sale comes with 8 games, adaptor plus all lead, sell for £250 ono. Tel. 081-994 5830.

BARGAIN! Amstrad 6128+ with keyboard, monitor, joypads, joystick, printer and loads of top titles games, the cost is a bargain, it is only £175, in very good condition, if interested please phone 061-432 6045, after 6pm only, please.

FOR SALE game magazines, over 100 mainly Sega including Mega-Tech 1-15, offers please to: Jeff, 52 Vivian Street, Abertillery, Gwent.

SNES (UK), boxed as new, plus 2 pads, S.Tennis, S.Mario World, Pilotwings, guaranteed, £140, also Road Rash for MD £22, brand new (80 watt), headrest speakers for car £28. Phone Jason on 081-997 8105.

NES FOR SALE with 8 games, 2 control pads and joystick good condition £100 ono. Tel. Andrew on Malvern (0684) 568259.

CHEAPEST MEGADRIVE, powerstick, Sonic 1&2, Ecco, Strider, Desert Strike, Fighting Masters, Lap Tennis, Revenge of Shinobi, Quackshot, over 25 mags, posters, review and tips books. All boxed, may part sell, everything £190, no offers. Phone Phil on (0707) 872482, evenings. (N.London/Herts area).

MEGADRIVE GAMES for sale, World Cup '90, Joe Montanna Football, Super High Impact Football, Arnold Palmer Golf, Desert Strike, Starflight, John Madden (original), Super Real Basketball, Super League Baseball, all excellent condition, from £20. Phone Paul on (0904) 631826.

GAME GEAR for sale with 3 games, plus adaptor £95 ono. Tel. 081-960 0859 after 4pm (London area only).

GAME GEAR for sale, includes: 4 in 1 cartridge, Sonic 2, psu and screen magnifier, all boxed with instructions, as new £100. Tel. 081-688 2911.

MASTER SYSTEM games for sale: Super Kick-Off, World Cup '90, Outrun, Populous, Champions of Europe, Donald Duck, Serect Command, Slap Shot and Sonic, make me an offer. Tel. (0444) 242261, and ask for Declan.

MEGADRIVE GAMES for sale: Ecco £25, Lemmings, Corporation and Splatterhouse 2 £20 each, all new, in perfect condition. Phone Dave on (0245) 256790 evenings and weekends only.

AMIGA 500 + Philips monitor (for best possible graphics), 30 games, demos, x-copy, blanks, 2 joysticks, mouse, psu, leads, etc., vgc, cost £700+, sell for £370. Tel. Sam on (0322) 223766. Buyer must collect.

(NEW) MASTER SYSTEM II with Sonic and other game £60, Olympic Gold, Outrun, Ninja, Shadow Dancer, Alien Storm. Call 081-863 3629 and ask for Liam.

SEGA MASTER SYSTEM, new, boxed, 2x control pads, light phaser, Sonic 2, Alien 3, Terminator, Operation Wolf, Prince of Persia, Safari Hunt, Hang On, worth £250, sell for £140, for £150 throw in your choice of game. Phone (0483) 811185, ask for Hatham.

MEGADRIVE for sale with 4 joypads, 19 games including: Buck Rogers, F-22, Desert Strike, Alien 3 worth £850, sell for around £350 ono, also 1meg Amiga 500 with extra d/drive, joystick, loads of games and extras worth £900, sell around £350 ono. Please call (0443) 404327.

MEGADRIVE with 2 controllers, Sonic, Sonic 2, LHX, Chuck Rock and Madden '92, still boxed, all mint condition, all reasonable offers will be considered, UK machine. Call Simon on (0865) 516746, anytime.

SEGA MEGADRIVE, 7 games, Sonic 1&2, Fantasia, Last Battle, Desert Strike, Mega panel & Jap convertor, £220 ono + Galaxy Force II. Tel. Simon on (0322) 528655.

MASTER SYSTEM for sale, 3 games, Lemmings, Super Monaco and G-Loc, worth £140 sell for £100, also Gameboy, 3 games, Tetris, Radar Mission and Marioland, worth £110 sell for £60. Phone (0234) 824943, between 5pm and 8pm.

GAME GEAR, adaptor, master gear, plus Sonic, Sonic 2, Super Kick Off, Shinobi, RC Grand Prix, £140. Tel. (0473) 735393.

COMMODORE 64, games for sale, many famous titles, eg Turbo, Outrun, Afterburner, Spiderman, Turtles, all must go £1, £2 and £5, tons of others, possible deals on bulk buys. Contact Lewis on 081-517 7572 (London), list of games and prices also available.

GAMES FOR Sega Master System: Indiana Jones, Vigilante, Basketball, Nightmare, Secret Command, My Hero, Global Defense, Great Volleyball, prices from £10-£15 each or buy all 7 together for £65. Postage Free! Any swaps also considered, so call Mark on (0778) 344094.

GAME GEAR with 8 games including Sonic, Olympic Gold, carry case, adaptor, worth £320, sell for £180 ono. Tel. (0994) 448446.

ATARI ST and Amstrad Computer games (home programmed) for list send SAE to: Derek Payne, 89 Wolverhampton Road, Codsall, Wolverhampton WV8 1PL.

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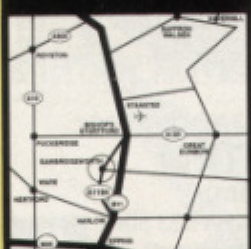
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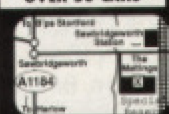
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next month

THE BEST OF THE BEST JUST GETS BETTER AND BETTER!

You know, people often say to us, "Guys, how do you manage to put out such a highly informative and yet thoroughly entertaining mag month after month?!" We just laugh, offer each other a knowing wink, and get back to the daily rush! Only the special, secret ingredients we use can offer you the ultimate gaming satisfaction and next month we'll be proving it again! As if the mag itself wasn't enough, freebies abound with Panini game cards, a mystery Sonic giveaway and another four exclusive Mega-CD cards! Add to this the usual up to the minute news, reviews and previews, the omnipotent YOB, the erudite presence of Jaz tackling your questions, and everything else that goes to make up MEAN MACHINES, and you've got a mag so smart it's got a Phd from the University of Oxford! How do we do it? Gee, we don't know! But we do it anyway! Yee-haah!

What's more, we've getting even bigger next month — so the sad wafffer-thin pamphlets that purport to be our competitors can just carry on crying into their coffee! Get your mitts on the June issue of Mean Machines on the 25 May, and let's get it on!



Out on 25th MAY